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VOL. 2562.

THE INVASION OF THE CRIMEA.
BY
ALEXANDER WILLIAM KINGLAKE.

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(THE
INVASION OF THE CRIMEA:

ITS ORIGIN,
AND
AN ACCOUNT OF ITS PROGRESS
DOWN TO THE DEATH OF
LORD RAGLAN.

BY
ALEXANDER WILLIAM KINGLAKE.

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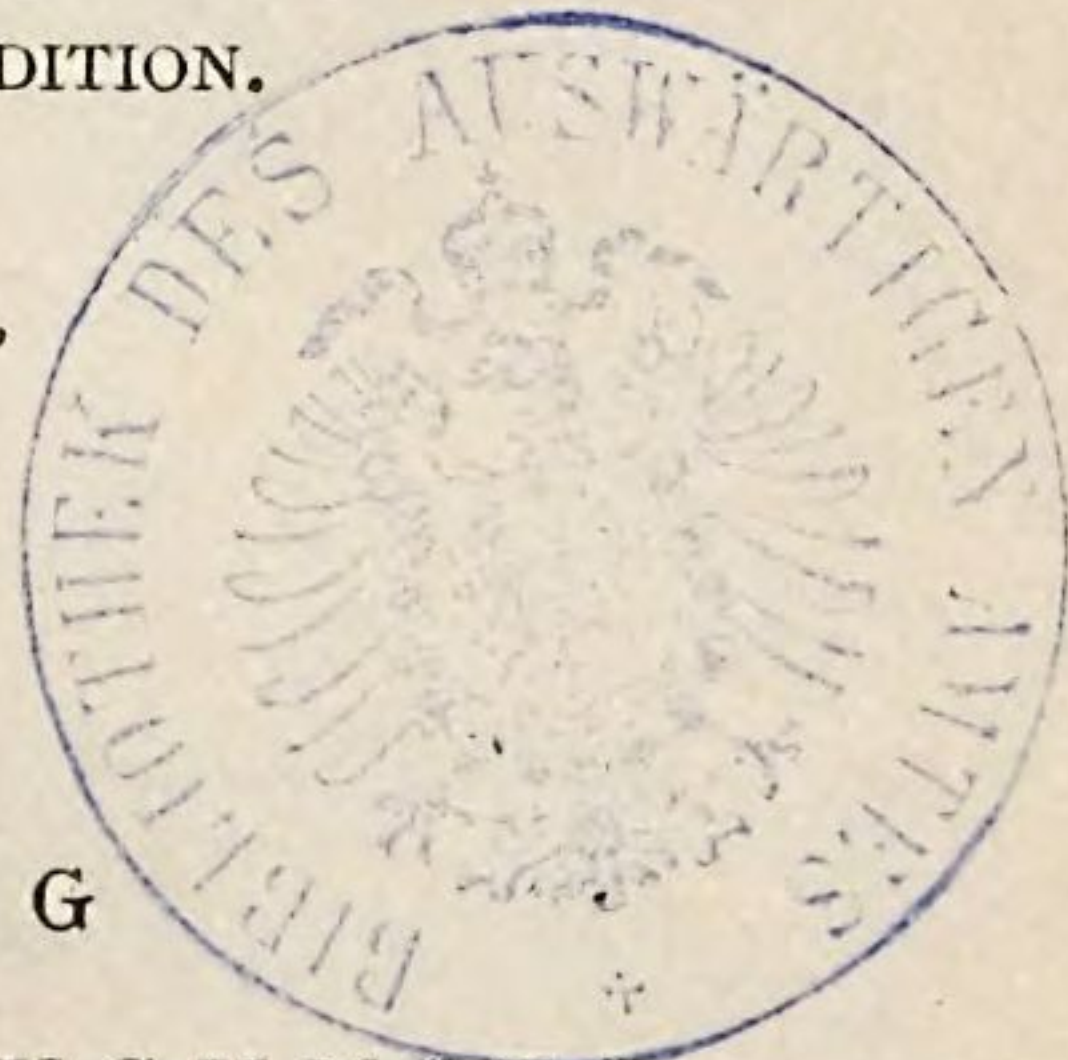
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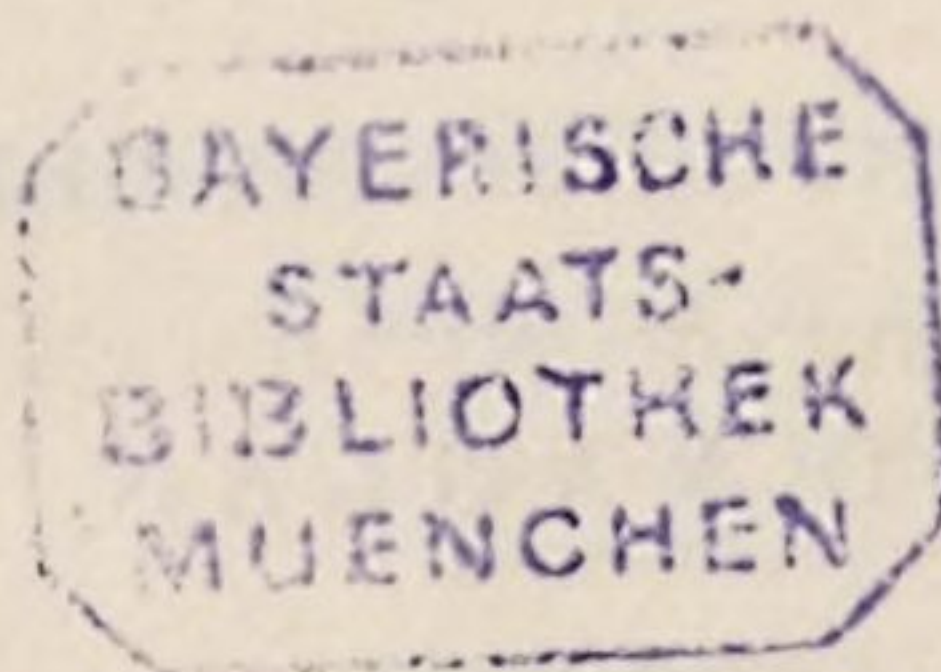
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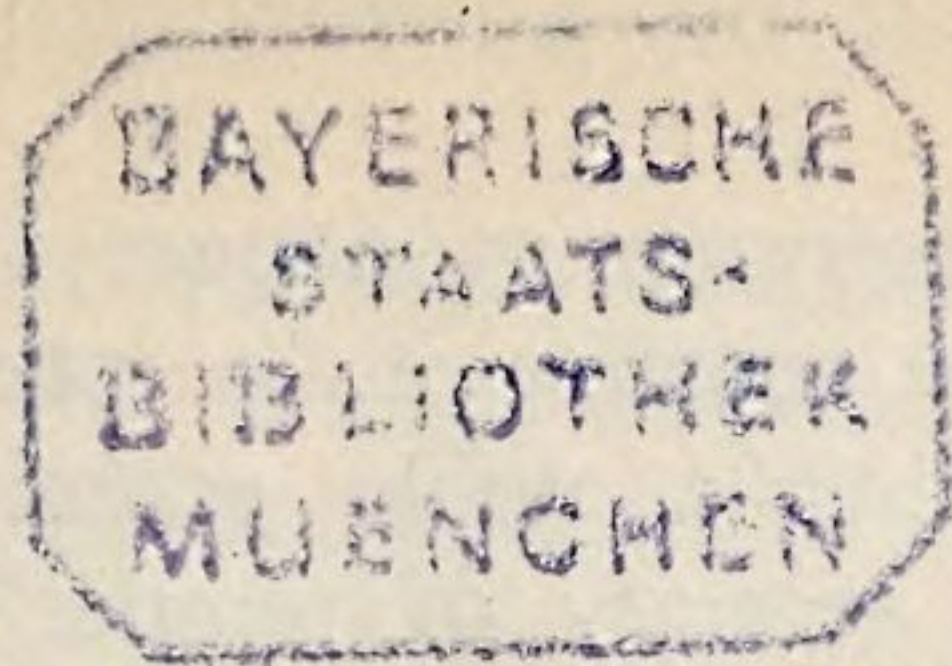
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FROM THE MORROW OF INKERMANN TO THE FALL OF CANROBERT.

(CONTINUED.)

CHAPTER VII.

THE SIEGE OF SEBASTOPOL (WITH EXCLUSION OF THE
APRIL BOMBARDMENT, ALREADY NARRATED) FROM
THE 9TH OF APRIL TO THE MIDDLE OF MAY.

I.

SIMULTANEOUSLY with the great cannonade, and with those troubled counsels which lasted until the middle of May, there took place not only some fights, but also some other occurrences that must not be left unobserved.

CHAP.
VII.

On the 11th of April, the French—and indeed I will say the Allies—sustained a painful loss. Whilst making his way along one of our unfinished trenches, General Bizot was struck by a shot, and the wound, some days later, proved mortal. Commanding the French Engineers, he had pursued his huge task with a zeal that never relaxed. So

Bizot
mortally
wounded.

CHAP.
VII.

habitually a scorner of danger that he always had seemed to be courting it, he preserved in the most trying moments a noble serenity of mind, with besides that serenity of temper which was one of the characteristics of his kindly nature.* The French army had always held Bizot to be a man of genuine worth.** Disloyally treated, and weakened by his Emperor's self-seeking intrigue, he still was so true a soldier that he did not allow himself to become at all soured by the overshadowing presence of Niel, and went on thinking only of duty, duty, duty. From the counsel we heard Bizot giving on the 10th of March, it may well be inferred that he had not been then made a sharer of the ugly design set on foot for keeping a French army tethered in the enemy's presence; and those who respect his memory may hope to remain in the faith that even down to his death he stood apart, free from the stain of having been ever initiated in any such ignoble mysteries. An abrupt disinterment of words confidentially written has indeed compelled us to see that in February—when still the “Winter Troubles” were rife—General Bizot could find heart to sneer at the “indolence” of the English, whose only real fault, as we know, was that of being so few;*** but already we have learnt how that perilous want of numbers was masked by the noble demeanour of our suffering army, and

* Niel, p. 199.

** Lord Raglan to Lord Panmure, 17th April 1855.

*** M. Rousset, vol. II p. 32, prints the words in which Bizot (writing to the French Minister of War) speaks of Niel's having “tried in vain to galvanise their indolence.”

may therefore forgive a French officer who imagined that its semblance of strength implied a power of adding to its daily allotment of work. If acquainted with our dread "Morning States," he—a man noble-hearted and just—would never have harboured the thought which inspired his ungenerous words.

CHAP.
VII.

It was on the 15th of April that General Bizot died. Lord Raglan in person, together with those of his Staff who could be spared from their imperative duties, showed the feeling with which they regarded the memory of the brave Engineer by following his remains to the grave.

In command of the French Engineers General Bizot was succeeded provisionally by General Dalesme, and definitively—after an interval which lasted until the 5th of May—by General Niel, who proposed himself for the place. This last appointment, however, was not of a nature to clash with the secret, the personal services which Niel had engaged to perform.

And succeeded
after an
interval by
Niel.

General Bizot had scarce breathed his last, when the French carried into effect a design he had long entertained, and had long been seeking to execute.* At the close of that series of mining operations which he had devised for the purpose, they at length on the evening of Sunday the 15th brought about some convulsing explosions which opened up from below a line of volcano-like craters at a distance of less than a hundred yards from the counterscarp of

The French
opening
ground by
mines in
front of the
Flagstaff
Bastion;

* See vol. XII., p. 137, an account of his earlier effort in the same direction.

CHAP.
VII.

the Flagstaff Bastion, and thus formed in front of the Work a long, deep cavity, interrupted, it is true, in one place, but forming elsewhere what, if shaped by the hand of nature, might almost have been called a "ravine."*

and there
forming
a 4th
Parallel.

This artificial opening of the ground close in front of the Flagstaff Bastion became for the French a beginning of their 4th Parallel, and—though not until after hard struggles—they were ultimately able to establish themselves in the hollow, taking care of course also to connect it with their 3d Parallel—full 100 yards less in advance—by covered lines of way.**

Unaware of the secret resolves which were too surely baffling its efforts, the French Army taken at large might have well felt a right to exult, when two-thirds of the distance which had separated their foremost Parallel from the Flagstaff Bastion were thus all at once overleapt by the art of the miner, and their people—with cover to shelter them—were planted at last within stone's-throw of that very counterscarp which they had hopefully begun to approach on the earliest night of the siege. But that same French Army comprised in its thousands two men who must needs have been gravely embarrassed by seeing—on the day of his death—this completion of Bizot's design; for, in faithful

* The incompleteness of the hollow at one spot resulted from the afterwards ascertained fact that in part of the mine some charges had failed to explode.

** In anticipation of the explosions destined, as we saw, to take effect on the 15th, the formation of these covered lines of way was begun on the night of the 11th.—Niel, p. 201.

obedience to the "Mission," both Canrobert and Niel had been minded to abstain from attacking the Bastion; yet how to excuse themselves for thus hanging back when at last after six months of toil their troops were now close to the goal, and when also in that dire extremity which before we observed, the defence of the Bastion was collapsing under the fire of great guns?* The two generals, it seems, would have liked to resume their subterranean warfare against the Flagstaff Bastion;** and in such case of course their resolve to abstain from assaulting it instantly might have been palliated, or even defended by alleging a not empty reason; but from that resource, it soon proved, they were altogether cut off by their own engineering exploit; for the mighty explosions it wrought had blown away into mere chaos the useful stratum of clay which till then had always welcomed their miners, and—confronted now instead by hard rock—they could not hope to make good any further advance underground.***

CHAP.
VII.

The tendency of this successful exploit to embarrass Canrobert and Niel.

Thus for not following up the creation of his 4th Parallel to its natural conclusions General Canrobert found himself left without any more valid "reason" than the one put forward by Niel of which we shall afterwards hear.†

When writing in 1870, General de Todleben had the "reason" before him, but apparently did not regard it as having been set up in earnest. Why—unless still intent upon mining—the French

* See vol. XII., p. 285. ** Niel, p. 208. *** Ibid.

† *Post*, pp. 6, 7. See Niel, pp. 106, 197; and see *post*, p. 12.

CHAP.
VII.

did not come on at once to storm his Flagstaff Bastion, he professed that he could not divine.*

Todleben's
encroach-
ments in
front of the
Central
Bastion.

Can-
robert's
unwilling-
ness to re-
sist them.

Passing yet further west to the front of the Central Bastion, Colonel Todleben at this time began to fasten new Works on the zone there dividing his lines from the French, doing this—at the first—by establishing lengthened chains of those greatly aggravated Rifle-pits which he has taught us to distinguish as “lodgments”; and, as previously on Mount Inkerman, and the Victoria Ridge, so here too before the Town front, General Canrobert, it seems, showed reluctance to make any resolute stand against the offensive encroachments.**

In professing to explain the reluctance attributed to General Canrobert, Niel, as usual, has passed by in silence that ill-omened “Mission” of his which, we know, was the true master-key for unlocking any such secrets;*** and instead, has given this reason to account for his Chief's state of mind:—He has explained General Canrobert's reluctance to withstand the enemy's main encroachments in this western part of the field by saying that the Malakoff had become the real object of attack, that the siege against the Town front had grown to be a task of less moment, and that therefore, to grudge making sacrifices in conflicts no longer thought cardinal might not, after all, be unwise.⁽¹⁾

This, how-
ever, over-
come.

But whatever its cause, the French commander's

* Todleben, vol. II. p. 150.

** Niel, p. 239; Rousset, vol. II. pp. 166, 167.

*** See vol. XII., chap. V.

reluctance to make a vigorous stand against Todleben's successive aggressions was destined, this time, to be vanquished, or perhaps one may say overruled. CHAP.
VII.

The truth is that in this the "old siege"—the siege against the Town front—a man stronger than Canrobert, and stronger than Canrobert's Emperor, was beginning to make himself felt.

Pélissier, it is true, at this time commanded only a corps; but his, as it chanced, were the troops affronted, challenged, defied, by this last growth of new Russian works thrown out in advance of Sebastopol; and, although of course lawfully he was even on this his own ground a subordinate owing obedience to the acknowledged Commander-in-Chief, he still was by nature so constituted as to be in hot rage at the notion of quietly, tamely enduring the enemy's audacious encroachments. And rage with him was a power. Having great strength of will, whilst able at pleasure to arm himself—almost dramatically—with an overpowering vehemence of manner and speech, and besides, exerting his pressure on one who well knew him to be indicated by a Dormant Commission for the exercise (under certain contingencies) of even the highest command, he—after some effort apparently—got his way over Canrobert, and was either empowered or suffered to make that war against "lodgments" of which we are going to speak.* not brook-
ing the en-
croach-
ments
against his
own front.

* Niel, p. 203. With respect to the "counter-guard lodgments," my inference that Pélissier carried his point after some "effort," is warranted, I think, by Niel's account, pp. 239, 240, and more decisively by Rousset's, vol. II. p. 166.

CHAP.
VII.

The anomaly
thence
resulting.

Thence sprang the anomaly of Frenchmen yielding tamely to pressure in that chosen part of the field where they meant the attack to be real, and asserting their strength with decisiveness on ground far away towards the west where their chief regarded the task as one of inferior moment.* What thus turned the scale against seemingly fair presumptions was — a well-known disturbant of inference — the strong, fierce will of one man.

Fights for
the Cimetière
Lodgments.

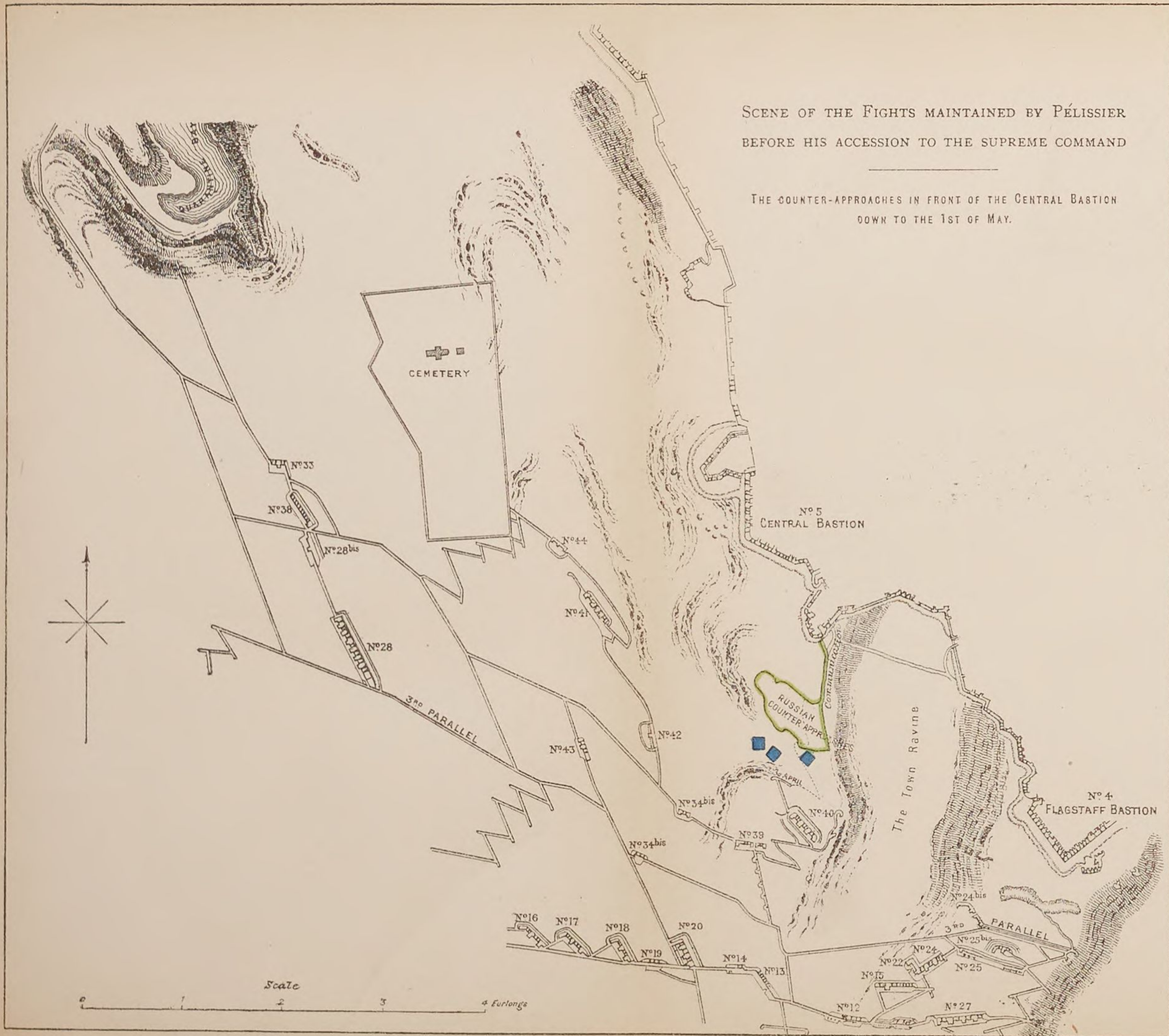
The "Cimetière" chain of Lodgments was one so boldly thrown forward that from some of them the enemy commanded a near, an endangering view of the French siege-works; and Pélissier, not willing to brook so plain an affront, determined to attack them on the night of the 10th of April. His purpose being divined by the Russians (who had seen him preparing his enterprise), they resorted to a plan which apparently was based on some theory that in contests for lodgments, it is better to have to attack than it is to have to defend them. Under cover of evening, they withdrew their troops from the lodgments and prepared to ply the new occupants who might soon be there posted with a powerful fire of artillery poured out from the Central Bastion.

Between nine and ten o'clock in the evening the French, taking it for granted that a combat awaited them, advanced in some strength and planted themselves in the then empty lodgments, but were presently assailed (in accordance with their adversary's design) by a powerful artillery-fire. Under this ordeal,

* Rousset's, vol. II. p. 166.

SCENE OF THE FIGHTS MAINTAINED BY PÉLISSIER
BEFORE HIS ACCESSION TO THE SUPREME COMMAND

THE COUNTER-APPROACHES IN FRONT OF THE CENTRAL BASTION
DOWN TO THE 1ST OF MAY.



the French held their ground firmly during several hours, but not without suffering losses.

Then at two o'clock in the morning, the enemy made a powerful sortie, retook at once two of the lodgments, and did not give himself rest until he had recovered them all. In like manner, on the nights of the 11th and the 12th there was a taking and retaking of these pits; but on the night of the 13th, Pélissier caused them to be attacked in some force and destroyed.

Resulting
after some
days, in the
definitive
success of
the French.

With the deliberate purpose of covering a somewhat weak part of his defences by a species of "counter-guard," Colonel Todleben had established in front of his Schwartz Redoubt another strong chain of lodgments which were to make a beginning of the Work designed.

Todleben's
project for
a new
Work of
counter-
approach.

These lodgments Pélissier seized on the last-mentioned night—the night of the 13th of April; but after dark on the 23d, and again on the 24th, the strife was renewed. From that last night forward until the close of the month, the Russians not only remained masters of the lodgments, but deliberately converted them into a new Work of counter-approach affecting the form of a redoubt, and so audaciously thrown forward as to be 141 yards in advance of the Russian line of defence and within 116 yards of the French siege-works.* Although

The fight-
ing for
lodgments
construct-
ed in
further-
ance of the
project.

* Todleben does not deny that this extreme proximity to the enemy's siege-works was a defect, but says its position was dictated by the lay of the ground. The new Work was executed by troops of the Sousdal Regiment, and thence acquired its name.

CHAP.
VII.The Sous-
dal Coun-
terguard.

not yet supplied with its appointed armament, this new Work—the Sousdal Counter-guard—was furnished already with nine little 6-pound mortars which, along with the fire of the riflemen, were used to annoy the French workmen who toiled in their most advanced trenches. The work was connected with the flank of the Schwartz Redoubt by a trench so placed as to be concealed from the eyes of French gunners by a fold of the ground. On the whole, this new counter-approach, if endured long enough to allow of its being completed and armed and defiantly maintained (as had been the Kamtchatka Lunette), would bring General Pélissier's corps d'armée into almost the same sort of plight as that in which we saw the French placed when fended off by new Works to a distance greater than ever from the front of the coveted Malakoff.

General Canrobert, we know, grudged the loss that would have to be suffered in wresting this Sousdal Counter-guard from the enemy;* but by strength of will armed with overpowering vehemence Pélissier brought his Chief to consent that the attack should be made, and orders were given accordingly.**

Brilliant
attack by
the French
on the
Sousdal
Counter-
guard,

At half-past ten o'clock on the night of the 1st of May, a strong body of French infantry commanded by General Motterouge advanced against the Work in three columns, of which those on the right and left flanks were respectively under the orders of General de Salles and General Bazaine, whilst Gen-

* Niel, p. 239, and Rousset, vol. II. p. 166.

** Niel, pp. 239, 240; Rousset, vol. II. p. 166.

eral Motterouge in person led forward the two battalions which formed his centre column.*

CHAP.
VII.

Either in or about the Work, the enemy at this time was present with no less than four battalions; but devoting his care to the task of repairing havoc done in the daytime by French artillery, he is said to have been off his guard, and to have been taken in part by surprise.**

Without firing a shot, the assailants made good their advance to the edge of the Work, and the centre column at once broke over its parapet intent on the use of the bayonet. Some lively fighting ensued, but did not last long. The centre column prevailing soon drove out the Russians, pursued them some way in their flight, and was master of the counter-approach including its nine little mortars.

Then with admirable valour and skill Colonel Guérin of the French Engineers and the officers and men working under his guidance made haste to clench the victory. Reversing the parapets of the captured Work, they converted to the use of the French what so lately had sheltered the Russians, and achieved under fire the perilous and difficult task of forming (by flying sap) the gabionaded approach—full 350 yards long—that would link to their system of trenches the newly effected conquest.

* Niel, p. 240 *et seq.* I am unable to give the numerical strength of the columns; but they comprised, it seems, altogether two entire battalions, with besides twenty-seven companies. — Rousset, vol. II. p. 166.

** Todleben, vol. II. p. 198.

CHAP.
VII.

The conduct of the French troops, that night, was, as Lord Raglan said, "very brilliant."*

The time for attacking and seizing this work of counter-approach was happily chosen; for (except as regards the small mortars) it had not as yet been armed, though its ramparts had already attained such a height and solidity that, when once in the hands of the victor, they afforded him a much-needed shelter against the fire of the place.

Losses
sustained
in the night
combat of
the 1st of
May.

It was not without making sacrifices that the French achieved this conquest of what at the first had been only a chain of those aggravated Rifle-pits which Todleben used to call "Lodgments." In killed and wounded, they lost, it would seem, about 600 officers and men;** the Russians 425.***

Canrobert
apologising
for this
victorious
exploit.

Strange as it may seem to those who have not grasped the full bearing of General Niel's "mission," it is actually true that General Canrobert offered an excuse to the Home Government for this victorious exploit, as one of a kind inconsistent with "the system of waiting"—a system which seemed to forbid all such actions; and he added that the embarrassment thus caused was "one of the difficulties of the situation."†

* I quote this high praise from Lord Raglan's published Despatch, May 5, 1855.

** Niel, p. 241. The numbers killed and wounded on the French Left at the time in question—*i.e.*, from the 1st to the 2d of May—is stated at 602, and it does not appear that there was any other combat that night. The French losses at the battle of the Alma were not, it seems, quite so great as those they sustained in this combat.

*** Todleben, vol II. p. 199. † Rousset, vol. II. p. 167.

On the following day, the French strengthened themselves yet further in the conquered Work, and gave it a name. They called it, "The Work of the 2d of May"; and afterwards, at about three o'clock, they promptly repulsed a sortie which the Russians attempted against it.

CHAP.
VII

The Sous-dal Counter-guard converted into a French Work;

On the night of the 13th, they repulsed a new sortie attempted against the Work, as also one made further west with a view to aid the main object by making a diversion elsewhere.

and held fast.

Pélissier had not yet opened his small, though determined campaign against the "Counter-guard" Lodgments, when on other and distant lodgments confronting the left advanced sap of Gordon's Attack our people made an assault. Against that same part of our siege-works, and to prevent the English from seizing those very same lodgments (which our people still always called rifle-pits), the enemy had determined to make a sortie on the night of the 20th of April;* but our people anticipated him by twenty-four hours; and it was at nine o'clock on the evening of the 19th of April that, commanding in person a detachment of his splendid 77th Regiment, Colonel Egerton assaulted the lodgments. He attacked them with an "impetuosity"—Lord Raglan uses the word—which did not prevent the conflict from being severe for a time, but caused it nevertheless to be short. He promptly carried the lodgments, but suffered some loss, and Captain Lemprière of his

The fighting for lodgments in front of "Gordon's Attack."

Egerton's achievement.

* Todleben, vol. II. p. 162.

CHAP.
VII.

regiment, a young, though most able officer, was one of the killed.

In one of the captured lodgments, our Engineers resolved to establish a lodgment of their own, and to connect it with the head of their sap. This, though only of course incompletely, they found means to do in the course of three or four hours. They determined that they would not retain the other lodgment; but some men—perhaps eight or ten—were left there on watch for the time.

At about one o'clock the Russians advanced with a whole battalion of their famous Vladimir Regiment, reinforced by some hundreds of men volunteering from its other battalions for this special service. The assailants drove in our covering sentries and the eight or ten soldiers left watching in the otherwise unoccupied lodgment.

Then advancing against the lodgment which our people had resolved to hold fast, the Russian force moved in its strength; but the English coming up in good time, soon drove back the Vladimir troops, thus defeating the enemy's efforts to reconquer what he had lost. Thenceforth the coveted lodgment remained connected definitively with the siege-works of "Gordon's Attack."

This capture destroyed all the value of the other lodgment, which therefore was left unoccupied by the Russians as well as the English.*

* And so it remained until the morning of the 21st, when Lieutenant Walker of the 30th, moving gallantly out with a party of volunteers, completely filled in and razed it.—Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, April 24, 1855.

But this “brilliant achievement”—I quote the two words from Lord Raglan—was one that cost our people some lives, and—what is more—it cost them a life. Whilst forming his troops for the second of the two encounters, Colonel Egerton was killed. In his official despatch, Lord Raglan speaks with great warmth of Colonel Egerton’s services, declaring indeed that the army “could not have sustained a “more severe loss” than the one which his death inflicted, and that “so it was felt in the army, and “in the 77th where he was much beloved and was “deeply lamented”; but in a private letter of the same date he could not help giving a further expression to his sense of Egerton’s worth; saying even that, although the achievement would, he “doubted “not, produce a good effect both on the enemy and “our allies, it was dearly bought by the sacrifice of “the life of Colonel Egerton, who was one of the best “officers in the army, and looked up to by all.”*

His death.

His fame.

But more puissant than all words of praise is the memory of what Egerton did on the morning of Inkerman, where, General Buller commanding, he with less than 300 men of his glorious 77th turned back the whole tide of a battle then rolling in with the weight of Soimonoff’s gathered masses.**

It happened that, in proportion to the strength of the rank and file, a somewhat large number of

The praises
bestowed

* Private Letter to Lord Panmure, 21st April 1855.

** His exact strength was 259. See chap. VI. sec. XVI. of Inkerman volume, p. 148 *et seq.* of 1st (Octavo) Edition, vol. IX. of Tauchnitz Edition, p. 155 *et seq.* It will be seen that the gallant young Lemprière, struck down on this 19th of April, was one of the officers present under Egerton at Inkerman.

CHAP.
VII.

by Lord
Raglan on
the troops
taking part
in this com-
bat.

The losses
it caused
our people.

The night
sorties dur-
ing this
period.

officers were present in these fights for the lodgment, and I observe that the conduct of eight of them won the high approval of Lord Raglan.*

Lord Raglan reported the conduct of the troops to have been admirable.

In killed and wounded, all reckoned, the losses were, it seems, sixty-eight.**

In the course of this period the sorties—made always at night—against the French and the English trenches, were efforts of a determined kind, but after more or less fighting, were all of them duly repulsed without having done any harm great enough to be specially memorable. The real advantage achieved by these petty enterprises was of a general—not special—kind. They kept the besiegers on the alert, and made it their duty to go on unceasingly with the always harassing task committed to their “guards of the trenches.”

These night sorties against the English trenches took place sometimes under conditions which gave our people occasion for showing their superb fighting qualities, and winning the gracious approval of Lord

* Namely, besides Colonel Egerton and Captain Lemprière, both killed, General Lockyer (general officer of the trenches in the Right Attack), Colonel Mundy of the 33d (who succeeded Egerton in the command of the force), Colonel Tylden, Captain Owen, and Lieutenant Baynes, all three of the Engineers, and Captain Gwilt of the 34th Regiment. The same despatch mentioned Captain King of the Engineers in words of high praise, but for services rendered before the 19th. He had been wounded on the 17th.

** Journal of Royal Engineers, vol. II. p. 158. The amount of the Russian loss is not given.

Raglan—a commander so just and so generous, that he did not like his praise to be stinted by the smallness or obscurity of the arena in which his officers and men might be often disclosing their prowess. There for instance was heart in his tone when, to take but one sample, he told the Home Government that a determined sortie had been “most nobly met and repulsed.”* CHAP.
VII.

Omar Pasha, one day, from his camp in the plain of Balaclava, effected a little reconnoissance to the left bank of the Tchernaya. This I mention because the battalions composing his principal force were flanked on their left by some cavalry, and field-batteries, which with excellent courtesy the French and the English Commanders had placed—for once—under the guidance of a Turkish and Mussulman Pasha. A recon-
naissance
by Omar
Pasha.

Why re-
corded.

Towards the end of the month of April, the task of laying down a submarine telegraph cable connecting the Chersonese with Varna was brought to completion; and so early as the 2d of May the arrangements for intercommunication were perfected. Thenceforth a few hours sufficed for the passage of messages flying from either Paris or London to the camps in front of Sebastopol. Submarine
telegraph
connecting
the Cher-
sonese with
Varna.

* See his published Despatches on the sorties of the nights of the 5th, 9th, and 11th of May.—Sayer's Collection, pp. 158, 160, 161. In these Lord Raglan accords high praise to the troops, and—by name—to Captain Williamson and Lieutenant Gubbins of the 30th, Lieutenant Rochfort of the 49th, Colonel Trollope, Lieutenant-Colonel Mundy, Captain Turner of the Royal Fusiliers, Captain Jordan of the 34th, and Captain Edwards of the 68th, killed.

CHAP.
VII.

Its counter-
balancing
mischiefs.

The Eupa-
toria cable.

The acces-
sion of
15,000 Sar-
dinian
troops
under
General de
la Mar-
mora.

This facility of communication, however, was not an unmixed advantage; and perhaps indeed many of those who will see its effects as experienced in the night of the 3d of May will impatiently say that the change was rather a curse than a blessing.*

There also was laid down a cable which connected the Chersonese with Eupatoria.

Lord Raglan towards the close of this period was happily strengthened in numbers by a large and welcome accession of troops placed under his orders.

The King of Sardinia had so aimed his exalted ambition as to make the cause of Italy his own, and his counsels at this time were guided by a Minister of rare sagacity, who perceived that an object so great, yet also so perturbing to Europe, was one wholly out of the reach of common, hand-to-mouth statesmanship, and could only be accomplished, if ever accomplished at all, by what, as distinguished from "statesmanship," may perhaps be called far-sighted statecraft. When England and France had taken up arms against Russia, Count Cavour—with some aid, it would seem, from the clear-seeing mind of a woman**—made bold to adopt a policy which appeared at first sight highly venturesome, and by many perhaps would be treated as somewhat unscrupulous;⁽²⁾ but, so far as con-

* See *post*, p. 59 *et seq.*

** Cavour's niece, the Countess Alfieri. I owe my knowledge of this to Mr. Hayward. See in his *Biographical Essays* the one on Count Cavour.

cerned its policy, he at least knew how to support it by a fair show of reasoning. He argued that sooner or later, the war, as matter of course, would be followed by a treating for peace in which the belligerents, all of them, would naturally have to take part, and that therefore, if the King of Sardinia were simply to take the step of declaring war against Nicholas, he too (by his Minister) would be necessarily present in Congress, and there by mere utterance of the name of "Italy" might already be advancing her cause; whilst also, if furnishing troops to fight side by side with those of the Western Powers, he might earn a clear right to have their goodwill, and deserve it indeed all the more, since he had not himself any grievance, or ground of complaint against Russia.

Thus it happened that on the 8th of May General de la Marmora, with a part of the 15,000 Sardinian troops despatched to the seat of war, and followed by the rest of the force, was already landing at Balaclava, and placing himself, as agreed, at the English Commander's disposal.

Words other than mine will commemorate the battle of the Tchernaya, and the part there victoriously taken by General de la Marmora at the head of his Sardinian army; but without breaking loose from that tether which confines me within the period ended on the 28th of June, I can say that, whilst Lord Raglan lived, his relations with the welcome allies thus joining their strength to his own were always thoroughly cordial.⁽³⁾

CHAPTER VIII.

TROUBLED COUNSELS OF THE FRENCH.

I.

CHAP.
VIII.Tendency
of a suc-
cessful
bombard-
ment to de-
range the
working of
Niel's
"mission."Canrobert
ignoring
the success
of the bom-
bardment.

THE work of destruction effected in the two White Redoubts, in the Kamtchatka Lunette, and above all, in the clusters of batteries which included the Flagstaff Bastion, must needs have been partly descried, and partly also inferred by many of the artillerymen busied in the French advanced batteries;* but, supposing him to have bestowed little care on their necessarily piecemeal accounts, it was possible for General Canrobert to be far from completely aware of the havoc his siege-guns had wrought; and if, on the other hand, knowing the whole, or one-half of the truth, he must have found himself strangely embarrassed by the exigencies of his Emperor's plot; since, to own that the April Bombardment had opened fit paths for assault, would be almost the same as acknowledging that sound war-like counsels demanded those very exertions of force which the ill-omened "Mission" forbade.

Be all this as it may, General Canrobert ignored from the first, and persistently went on ignoring the effects of his own cannonade.

So early as the 10th of April (which was only the second day of the bombardment, and one on which the defence of Sebastopol was languishing for want of ammunition, and whilst also the White

* For the extent of that work of destruction, see vol. XII., pp. 178-208.

Redoubts and the Flagstaff Bastion were falling into that state of utter helplessness which they reached before sunset) General Canrobert intimated to Lord Raglan that he did not much expect the bombardment to produce a successful result;* and on the same day, he addressed to his Emperor this very significant letter:—"If the superiority of our fire is "not completely established (which we shall know "to-morrow) we shall diminish it, and if necessary, "stop it altogether, keeping ourselves in readiness "against any attack by the relieving army. If this "attack (desired with so much reason) does not take "place, we (though harassing the enemy meanwhile "to the best of our power) shall await the arrival "of your Majesty's Army of Reserve, convinced in "such case that upon the action of that Reserve "army will depend the fate of Sebastopol."**

II.

On the 14th of April—a day when the Flagstaff Bastion, as we saw, was in desperate plight—there took place a conference at which (besides the principal French and English Artillery and Engineer officers) there were present General Canrobert, General Pélissier, General Bosquet, Omar Pasha, Sir Edmund Lyons, Sir George Brown, and Lord Raglan.*** The Conference lasted more than four hours, and all agreed that an immediate assault ought not to be attempted.⁽¹⁾ The French (excepting Pélissier, who

Con-
ference of
14th April.

Disposition
on the part

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, April 14, 1855.

** Rousset, vol II. p. 147.

*** Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, April 14, 1855.

CHAP.
VIII.

of the
French,
except
Pélissier,
to stop the
bombard-
ment;

but suc-
cessfully
combated
by Lord
Raglan
and Lyons.

A slight
relaxation
of the fet-
ters impos-
ed on Can-
robert
by Niel's
"mission."

advised going on with the siege) were at first for arresting the bombardment, if not indeed even for stopping all other aggressive proceedings until the place should be invested. Then Canrobert, Lord Raglan, Omar Pasha, and Sir Edmund Lyons retired into another room, and it appeared that Canrobert was for maintaining the "status quo"; but ultimately, though with no little difficulty, Lord Raglan—greatly aided by Sir Edmund Lyons—prevailed upon Canrobert to agree that the bombardment should be continued, though with diminished fire, in order that the ammunition might last the longer.*

General Canrobert at this time obtained what might seem at first glance like some small, very small relaxation of the miserable fetters he wore in obedience to General Niel's "mission." Whilst confronting at close quarters a powerful enemy, and having encamped at his side an unsuspecting ally kept in ignorance of the all-ruling "mission," he had patiently held the command during several weeks of what I called "an army in waiting"; and against the strange lot cast upon him, his pride, it seems, had not rebelled. But when the time for a great artillery effort drew nigh, the French Emperor dimly perceived that he had been placing his army in a predicament which might prove under certain conditions to be one of an odious sort, and well calculated, if the truth should leak out, to bring his name into disgrace. If indeed the bombardment should produce good and wholesome results, yet not of a kind so con-

* Lord Raglan to Lord Panmure, private letter, 14th April 1855, and same (Secret) to Secretary of State, 17th April 1855.

spicuous as to be appreciable by all observers, its success might be ignored, concealed, and denied; but what if its destructive power should prove overwhelming? If Sebastopol should seem to be lying at the mercy of a French army, was Canrobert still to be hindered from laying his hand on the prize by the exigencies of the Imperial mission? Plainly under the stress of such thoughts, yet clinging still to a hope that both the French army on the Chersonese, and the Army of Reserve at Constantinople might be kept in unimpaired force to await his good pleasure, he did, as too often men must, when torn by conflicting motives. He tried, as well as he could, to give some effect more or less to each of the opposing forces which strove for the mastery of his will; and at last, whilst announcing that he would have 40,000 men at Constantinople before the end of the month;* he yet did not grant the general leave to move any part of that force, save only in the desperate conjuncture of its proving to be peremptorily needed for the safety of his army.** And, after thus perversely continuing the disjoinder of his forces in the East, the Emperor ended by giving to General Canrobert this miserable instruc-

The miser-
able in-

* Letter from Emperor to Canrobert, partly read out by him to Lord Raglan. Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, 17th April 1855. The letter, or at all events the part of it read out to Lord Raglan, did not say what use was to be made of the 40,000 men.

** Lord Raglan (after hearing this from Canrobert) to the Secretary of State, Secret, 14th April 1855, and again (there stating the exception above shown) same to same, Secret, 24th April 1855.

CHAP.
VIII.

struction
given to
Canrobert
by his Em-
peror.

Can-
robert's
state of
mind.

The con-
duct and
bearing of
Niel.

His letter
of the 16th
of April to
the Minis-
ter of War.

tion: "Do what you can, but do not compromise
"yourself."*

With the slight, very slight relaxation of the rules of Niel's mission which this letter granted, it also kept in force so much of the old restraint that General Canrobert, it would seem, suffered tortures. There were times when he thought himself capable of directing that an assault should take place within perhaps less than a week, but none that found him inclined to take such a step the same day, or even so soon as the morrow; and one who has had access to his correspondence with the Emperor and the War Minister describes him as a man who between the conflicting ideas was "painfully oscillating."** Niel—never forgetting his "mission"—stood over the Commander-in-Chief with a will to denounce every notion that Canrobert might venture to harbour of assaulting Sebastopol, and the Imperial aide-de-camp thus superintending the general mingled even some scorn with his use of the curb; for he did not so much as believe that any design of assaulting would last until the cardinal moment for turning resolve into action.***

On the 16th, General Niel seems to have been displeased with Canrobert for not acting with more steadfast deference to the precepts of the "Mission," and apparently for even allowing the growth of con-

* Canrobert on the 16th of April read out to Lord Raglan the passage of a letter he had received from the Emperor which contained those words. Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, 17th April 1855.

** Rousset, pp. 146, 147.

*** See *post*, p. 27, his letter to the Emperor of the 17th April 1855.

sultations with reasoners who harboured the thought of assault; for he thus wrote to the Minister of War: —“I am going to try to turn the minds of the commanders from an attempt no less dangerous than useless, which I hope will be abandoned. . . . I did not advise engaging in this artillery conflict; for I had, and still hold the conviction that, even if it had proved more successful than it has, there still would not have been an assault driven into the town.”* Incredible, as it would seem, if not proved, this Aide-de-camp superintendent established at the French Headquarters made bold to reprove the Minister of War for not having lectured the unfortunate Canrobert, and thus kept him in more close obedience to the commands of the “Mission.” “I must regret, M. le Maréchal, that you did not speak to the Commander-in-Chief about the conduct of the siege. From the accounts furnished to you, you know pretty well what Sebastopol is, and besides, being close to the Emperor, you know many things that are not known here. I am convinced that if you had written in the sense in which I spoke, a great deal of faltering would have been avoided.”**

It was on the 16th of April that Lord Raglan received his first knowledge of what I have called the “miserable instruction”;*** and thenceforth he of course understood that the French Commander associated with him in the enterprise against Sebas-

* Rousset, vol. II. p. 145.

** Rousset, vol. II. p. 145, 146.

*** See *ante*, p. 24, and footnote.

CHAP.
VIII.

No termination of the secrecy which had shrouded Niel's "mission."

16th April. Agreement made between Canrobert and Lord Raglan;

but abandoned three days afterwards by Canrobert.

topol was not at the time a free agent; but one must not be led to infer that an end was thus put to the secrecy which had shrouded the "Mission" of Niel. Nothing short of the fall of the "Empire" with other favouring circumstances sufficed to lay bare the truth, and show how the "Mission" of Niel had been secretly taking effect from the time of his arrival in January to the mid-April period now reached.

On the 16th of April (after a preliminary discussion between the chief Engineer and Artillery officers of the allied armies), the three commanders met in conference determined that the contemplated assault should be delayed for some days (not saying how many), in order to give time for the construction of certain additional works; and they also put off their decision respecting what should be done against the Kamtchatka Lunette as well as against the place generally; but they agreed that an attack in one quarter should be made by a joint use of forces, French, English, and Ottoman. They resolved that, upon orders to that effect being given, the White Redoubts should be seized by troops to be drawn for the purpose from each of the three allied armies.*

Three days afterwards, however, Lord Raglan, when reminding his colleague of the agreement, found Canrobert appearing to think that the capture of those works, after all, "would not be attended "with any important advantage";** and accordingly the project was dropped.

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, April 17, 1855.

** This was on the 19th. Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, 21st April 1855.

On the 17th of April—the morrow of a day CHAP.
VIII.
 when the Flagstaff Bastion had been brought to a 17th April.
Letter
from Niel
to the Em-
peror.
 state of miserable wreck—Niel wrote direct to the
 Emperor:—"Sire, our artillery has not obtained great
 "results. Every morning the Place resumes its fire,
 "and each embrasure has its gun in a state for fir-
 "ing. The English little frightened at having to
 "pass over 600 *mètres* of ground before getting from
 "their parallel to the Redan had declared that they
 "were ready to assault; but since, reflections have
 "come, and yesterday evening, the three commanders
 "determined that they would prolong and diminish
 "their fire without stopping it. Sire, it is with lively
 "regret that I see the confirmation of what I have
 "always thought: the assault is so difficult, so dan-
 "gerous for the army, that when the moment comes,
 "people shrink from before it. The truth is that in
 "this (so-called) siege, people aim at an object which
 "they yet do not venture to grasp when they closely
 "approach it, that there is no solution but in the
 "investment of the Place after having beaten the
 "enemy, and that consequently it is necessary to
 "hasten as much as possible the arrival of the Army
 "of Reserve which your Majesty is forming at Con-
 "stantinople."*

III.

When the Flagstaff Bastion, on the evening of Ebullition
of warlike
impatience
on the part
of the
French
army.
 the 21st of April, had been not only silenced and
 brought to ruin by overwhelming fire, but also laid
 under the pressure of a 4th Parallel then newly

* Rousset, vol. II. p. 146.

CHAP.
VIII.

Canrobert
either shar-
ing the
feeling or
hurried
along by it.

opened against it at less than a hundred yards' distance, the French army hitherto patient could no longer be prevented from judging that the time for final action was ripe; and in the course of the following day a great weight of opinion pronounced that the enemy's shattered defences were meet to be carried by storm. Whether hurried along by this feeling, or—for the moment—advisedly sharing it, General Canrobert took strides on the road which seemed leading to resolute action.

Niel.

But Niel? Ruled alike by the exigencies of his "Mission," and by the strength of his convictions, he could hardly have relaxed his desire that the prudently guided Allies should adventure no assault of Sebastopol without first investing the place; and, if he did not stamp out the notion of prompt appeals to the bayonet by a peremptory use of his delegate power, nay even appeared for some hours to approve a resort to such measures, he has left behind him a clue from which one perhaps may infer that without foregoing his object he only changed his means of obtaining it. He believed that, though determined beforehand to assault the Redan, Lord Raglan, when it came to the point, would never send forward his columns of infantry across the breadth of interposed ground—which divided the goal set before them from their most advanced parallel;* and accordingly, he was free to imagine that his long-pursued task of preventing assaults might be, this time, performed by the English. Let the French with apparent

* See *ante*, p. 27. Niel's Letter of the 17th of April to the Emperor.

decisiveness propose a general assault. The English, thus brought to the point, would refuse, he imagined, to march against the distant Redan. Their refusal would at once put an end to the whole project, and on them—not the French or their Emperor—would fall the whole anger of those who were yearning for an assault of Sebastopol.

It was with a purpose made to seem firmly settled that the French on Monday the 23d of April began to concert fitting measures for a general assault. At a conference held in the morning, the chief Engineer and Artillery officers of the French and English armies declared their opinion in writing—a writing drawn up by Niel himself—and advised that, unless the investment of Sebastopol should be effected within ten days, the place should be assaulted.*

In the evening, General Canrobert came to Lord Raglan's quarters, bringing with him, as it seemed, bold resolves. He proposed that the Allies should assault Sebastopol; and to this Lord Raglan agreed. After a discussion which lasted two hours, General Canrobert and Lord Raglan arranged that the fire which had been slack for some days should be resumed on the 26th, and that after this fire should have been kept up for two days and a half, advances should be made against the place in such manner as should be thought most desirable.**

On the ground, as he wrote, that "General Canrobert and the greater portion of the French

CHAP.
VIII.

23d April.
The French
ostensibly
ready to
assault.

Prelimi-
nary con-
ference.

Evening of
the 23d.

Agreement
between
Canrobert
and Lord
Raglan for
a general
assault of
Sebasto-
pol.

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, April 24th, 1855. Rousset, vol. II. p. 154.

** Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, April 24th, 1855.

CHAP.
VIII.

Lord Raglan's impression.

“superior officers had hitherto shown such unwillingness to undertake anything that might involve “serious risk,” and that “the General-in-Chief had “always previously manifested a disposition to pursue “a very cautious course,” and had been “warned by “the Emperor not to commit himself,” Lord Raglan was greatly surprised at the apparently sudden conversion of his French allies to the policy of undertaking assaults, but—at first—he did not doubt their sincerity;* and accordingly addressed his Government in terms well befitting what seemed to be a grave conjuncture.**

IV.

General Canrobert's apparently uneasy state.

His letter next day (24th April) to the Emperor.

Not many hours had passed, when Lord Raglan perceived, as he thought, that under this new resolve to assault Sebastopol, General Canrobert did not feel “comfortable”;*** and how well he divined the truth we are able to see; for on the very morrow of the agreement made with Lord Raglan in the evening of the 23d, General Canrobert was writing to the Emperor in terms which not only declared the assault he had proposed on the previous evening to be a hazardous measure, but even shadowed out an intention—then already appearing half formed—to

* This is shown, I think, by his surmises as to the cause of their being determined (as he then thought they were) to undertake an assault.

** Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, April 24th, 1855. In quoting some words from the despatch, I have corrected what seemed to me a clerical error by substituting “involve” for “incur.”

*** Ibid.

abandon the accepted agreement, and supplant it by other designs. Niel also wrote to his sovereign by the same mail, and the Emperor thus cites the two letters:—"A letter from General Canrobert of the 24th of April, and another from General Niel announce to me that in accord with Lord Raglan they have decided that the assault should be delivered on the 28th or 29th of April, that the enterprise is hazardous, and that perhaps they will make up their minds to attack the enemy* and to invest the place, if the army of reserve receives orders to proceed to the Crimea. I received these two letters on the 5th of May."** . . . "Canrobert himself says that on the 24th the situation was so strained that it could not last more than fifteen days."***

CHAP.
VIII.

Niel writing to the Emperor at the same time.

The Emperor's account of the two letters.

With his mind in the state thus disclosed, General Canrobert might perhaps be expected to appreciate a newly found reason for abandoning the warlike agreement he had made on the previous day, and this he accordingly did—did even within a few hours.

On the morning of the 25th, Niel came to the English Headquarters, bringing with him a letter—a letter not very new (dated Paris, the 7th of April) from the Minister of Marine to Admiral Bruat—which intimated that the French Reserve troops at

Morning of 25th. Canrobert resolved to put off the assault;

* Some such words as "in the field," or "on the north side," appear to be wanting; but, if the sentence be without them imperfect, it can hardly be called obscure.

** The Emperor of the French to Lord Cowley, dated Palace of the Tuileries, 7th May 1855.

*** Ibid.

CHAP.
VIII.

The inter-
view be-
tween Niel
and Lord
Raglan.

Constantinople would be ready to embark for the theatre of war on the 10th of May. This letter Niel read to Lord Raglan, and he founded upon it a conclusion which already, he showed, had been reached with unanimity by General Canrobert and all the French Generals assembled to give him counsel—a conclusion pronouncing it “desirable to postpone the “offensive operations against Sebastopol.” He urged that, although inconvenient, delay was “preferable “to the immediate adoption of a course which would “be attended with great risk and could be pursued “under altered circumstances with better chances of “success.”* “Niel,” continued Lord Raglan, “made “some rather curious admissions. He avowed that “he had been strongly opposed to the reopening of “the batteries of the Allies, and that he held to the “opinion he had originally formed that an assault “could not be successful, and yet he had been con- “stantly urging General Rose to press upon me the “necessity of resuming the fire, and he drew the “Paper of the 23d already before your Lordship “which contained the recommendation of the Ar- “tillery and Engineer officers that an attack should “be made upon the place after an active bombard- “ment of forty-eight hours. I ventured to point this “out to him, and he fully acknowledged that I was “right, but he observed:—‘I am not the Com- “mander-in-Chief.’”**

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, 28th April 1855.

** Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, 28th April 1855. I translate the last words from the original French in which Lord Raglan gives them.

Lord Raglan of course could not baffle a scheme of postponement demanded by the unanimous authority of the assembled French generals; but, after all that had passed, he thought himself entitled to require that the proposal to put off the assault should be in writing. Niel judged the demand to be reasonable; and accordingly on the same day General Canrobert addressed to Lord Raglan a letter fulfilling the purpose. After saying that all had been prepared for the delivery of a general assault on about the 28th of April, he wrote:—"To-day, I
 "communicated to the generals commanding the two
 "Army Corps and the Engineers and Artillery of the
 "French army an official despatch announcing that
 "the Corps of Reserve forming at Constantinople
 "will be ready to commence operations on the 10th
 "of May next. In the face of this communication,
 "and seeing the possible consequences of a general
 "assault beset by the most difficult circumstances
 "that can take place in war—circumstances that
 "might compromise the two allied armies, and the
 "future of the great interests which they defend, the
 "conference unanimously expressed the opinion that
 "it was fitting to wait for the commencement of
 "operations by the Corps of Reserve. I submit to
 "your Lordship this opinion which seems to be in-
 "spired by considerations of a value that will not
 "escape you, and to which I think you will be will-
 "ing to give your approval."

CHAP.
VIII.Course
taken by
Lord Rag-
lan.25th April.
Can-
robert's
letter put-
ting off the
attack.

"What surprises me," writes Lord Raglan, "is
 "that, the proposition of the assault having emanated

Lord Rag-
lan's obser-
vation on

CHAP.
VIII.

the French
change of
counsel.

Circum-
stances
under
which the
letter to
Bruat was
put for-
ward.

“from the French on the 23d, they should all have
“been opposed to the proceeding on the 25th.”

The letter of the 7th of April, from the French Minister of Marine, which General Niel brought to Lord Raglan on this Wednesday the 25th, had seemingly reached Admiral Bruat in the course of the previous week;* and on the 24th, in the presence of both Canrobert and the English Commander, the admiral had stated its purport;** yet no one then broached the idea of making it serve as a ground for putting off the assault.*** Nor indeed can one say that this rudely disturbing idea would have ever been broached at all, if Lord Raglan (instead of consenting) had justified the calculations of Niel by declining to assault the Redan.†

When Canrobert (having found that the English were ready to take part in the assault) fell afterwards into the state of unhopefulness, and doubt, and anxiety disclosed by his plaint to the Emperor, he of course became ripe for that logic which drew from the letter to Bruat a reason for stopping the enterprise; but a general who, ever since February, had been suffering the audacious garrison to defy him with its counter-approaches, and had thrown

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, 28th April 1855.
“Must” have done so is what Lord Raglan says.

** Ibid.

*** This clearly results from the 2d paragraph of the last above-cited despatch.

† With respect to Niel’s idea that the English on reflection would not undertake a task so desperate as the assault of the Redan, see *ante*, his letter of the 17th of April.

away every occasion for seizing the Flagstaff Bastion, could hardly bespeak from our people a welcome for any discovery which only furnished new reasons for not yet assaulting Sebastopol.

CHAP.
VIII.

Still, what men in dispute call "an afterthought" is not of necessity worthless; and in fairness it ought to be said that on this 25th of April, the opportunities offered by the bombardment had already been lost;* so that then there were not those sharp reasons for prompt appeal to the bayonet which we saw had been pressing enough on many of the earlier days. Perhaps therefore, if men had been free from the anger provoked at the time by Canrobert's numberless falterings, they might hardly have refused to acknowledge that, whilst having before him the prospect spread out to his sight by the letter of the 7th of April, the French Commander was justified in resolving to wait for the co-operation of the Corps of Reserve before venturing to undertake such a measure as the general assault of Sebastopol.

Weight
due to the
letter of the
7th of
April.

V.

But supposing this conclusion accepted, and accordingly agreeing with Canrobert that a vitally momentous decision was rightly averted by the letter of the 7th of April, it seems wondrous that he of all men should have long been excluded from that very parcel of knowledge which was held (when discovered at last) to afford the sure clue for his

The pre-
vious con-
cealment
from Can-
robert.

* The general bombardment had ceased on the 18th, and the fire directed specially against the Flagstaff Bastion had not lasted beyond the 22d.

CHAP.
VIII.

guidance, and left to find it out accidentally, after many a day, from a letter which Admiral Bruat had for some other purpose adduced.

The truth is that on the subject of his Corps of Reserve the French Emperor had been maintaining from the first a system of almost childish concealment against his own general Canrobert;* though perhaps it was mainly from sloth, or from want of comprehensive brain-power, that he let concealment run on to its more extravagant lengths. That his admirably organised Ministry of War failed to save him from so huge a default, is not perhaps very wonderful; since plainly his interposition, being fitful, ill-conceived, and mysterious, must have tended to hamper its clock-work. "The Emperor" writes Vaillant to Canrobert "chooses to have his Army of Reserve in hand; I cannot better explain myself."** When absolute concealment from Canrobert of what thousands were partially knowing had become impossible, the Emperor still went on concealing from him as much as he could—concealing from him, for instance, the aim with which a French Army had been gathered on the shores of the Bosphorus.

This discrediting collapse of an enterprise which had quickened the pulse of three armies would have

* As well showed by Marshal Vaillant's mysterious letter to Canrobert. Rousset, vol. II. p. 35, and quoted *below*. "Le général Canrobert lui-même n'en devait rien apprendre." These words are given by Rousset authoritatively because he had had access to the secret papers of the War Department. Vol. II. p. 35.

** Rousset, vol. II. p. 35.

all been escaped, if the Emperor, or the Emperor's Government, proceeding in a straight course of action, had simply kept Canrobert's knowledge abreast of that furnished to Bruat; for the outburst of warlike impatience which provoked strong resolves on the Monday would have plainly been calmed on the Saturday or the Sunday before, by assigning that ground for delay which was afterwards declared to be cogent by all the assembled French generals.

VI.

How long this postponement of the assault might continue no one then could divine. The letter from the Minister of Marine to Admiral Bruat showed indeed that (as judged by its writer) the Corps of Reserve would be ready to take ship at Constantinople on the 10th of May; but whither it was to be borne when embarked, and when, and where, and how it was to be brought into real co-operation with Canrobert's army, no men in the Crimea yet knew. According to Canrobert, and all his assembled advisers, "it was fitting to wait for the commencement of operations by the corps of reserve."* If, however, brought into close harmony with the design of Niel and his Emperor, the postponement would be one carried on to that fondly imagined time when (after a brilliant campaign that was not to be even begun until some—as yet—unknown period) Sebastopol would be on all sides invested.

Nor indeed was a general assault the only measure postponed until that imagined time. General

Uncertainty as to the duration of the postponement.

Canrobert's idea of its scope.

* See *ante*, p. 33.

CHAP.
VIII.

The old
fettters re-
fastened
upon him.

Canrobert desired that meanwhile the Allies should even abstain from the easier, the narrower task of storming the outworks thrown out in advance of the fortress; and accordingly, when, on the 30th, Lord Raglan proposed to Canrobert an assault on the counter-approaches, he encountered a decisive refusal.*

It was thus that after an interval of seeming freedom which lasted some forty-eight hours, General Canrobert once more submitted to have refastened upon him the whole suit of long-worn fetters with which Niel's "Mission" had loaded him.

We are beginning to see something now of war business superintended by the Emperor Louis Napoleon. It was this same weak, meddlesome hand still playing with the same State machinery, that afterwards in the fulness of time brought cruel disasters on France.

CHAPTER IX.

THE NOW ACTIVELY PERTURBING INTERFERENCE OF
LOUIS NAPOLEON IN THE WAR FOR SEBASTOPOL.

I.

CHAP.
IX.

The hitherto
paralysing
interference
of the French
Emperor

How oppressively Louis Napoleon had been weighing on the allied armies from February to the close of April, we have well enough seen; but (with the idea of suspending decisive action until after his arrival) he had been hitherto only preventing—not ordering—any attacks. When, however, the 3d of May came, General Canrobert found himself placed

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, May 5, 1855. Experience soon afterwards proved the wisdom of Lord Raglan's proposal.

under more perturbing instructions. He learned that his Emperor—this nearly a fortnight before—had entered upon the system of driving him into warlike activity by orders sent from afar—from indeed—of all the places on earth!—Windsor Castle and Buckingham Palace.

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IX.

now
changed
into active-
ly perturb-
ing dicta-
tion.

At a time in the middle of April when still the bombardment was raging, when it seemed that the war was fast entering upon a critical phase, and when also the advance of the spring was inviting to enterprise, the French Emperor with his beauteous Empress paid a visit to England;* and alike by the Queen, by the Government, by the people at large, was received with a genial welcome—a welcome all the more animated, since he came with a warlike intent—with intent to form and execute plans for compassing the fall of Sebastopol. He had with him Marshal Vaillant, his Minister of War.

His visit to
England.

The first Council of War (if so one may call such a conclave) was held at Windsor Castle, and there were present the Emperor, Prince Albert, Lord Clarendon, Lord Palmerston, Lord Cowley, Lord Panmure, Sir John Burgoyne, Marshal Vaillant, and Count Walewski. The Emperor at this meeting was pressed to abandon his project of going out to the Crimea, but without being then at all shaken in what seemed his steadfast resolve; and he not only gave his opinion on the prospects of the Sebastopol siege, and the principle which should rule future action, but also went on to disclose the plan of campaign he had formed.

The Coun-
cil of War
at Windsor
Castle.

The Em-
peror's re-
solve to
join his
army.

* He came on Monday, the 16th of April.

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IX.

His agree-
ment with
our Gov-
ernment
upon pre-
liminary
questions.

With his consciousness of all he had done to-
wards arresting (through General Niel's "mission")
the genuine advance of the siege, the French Em-
peror of course had some grounds on which to found
a prophecy that the then still raging bombardment
would fail in its object; and he found our Govern-
ment ready to avow the same faith, as also to accept
his theory that Sebastopol could not be taken with-
out first investing the place.

II.

The preliminary arrangements on which the Em-
peror proposed to base his plan of campaign were
framed in a spirit appreciative of both our army and
its chief; for Lord Raglan with his whole English
force, and a largely extended command over the
troops of other nations, was to be withdrawn from
the tedious labours of the siege, and entrusted with
the more brilliant service of opening a campaign in
the field.

The Em-
peror's
proposals.

With an understanding that Eupatoria should be
held by 30,000 Turks under Omar Pasha, the Em-
peror proposed that the forces to be engaged against
Sebastopol should be divided into three armies:
One of these armies charged with the task of hold-
ing the trenches and guarding the siege material as
well as the ports of supply was to have a strength
of 60,000, consisting of 30,000 French, with besides
a like number of Turks, and to be commanded by
General Canrobert.

The other two armies were to be called respec-
tively "the 1st," and "the 2d army of operation."

The "1st army of operation" was to act in the open field with the 25,000 infantry (supported by our cavalry and artillery) which constituted the English force, but with also a body of 5000 French troops; with besides, the 15,000 men of the Sardinian contingent, and moreover—so it was hoped—with as many as 10,000 Turks, the whole numbering not less at the least than 45,000 men (with perhaps indeed 10,000 more), and to be commanded by Lord Raglan.

The "2d army of operation"—called afterwards by Louis Napoleon "the army of Diversion"—was to consist of 45,000 French troops withdrawn from before Sebastopol, and of the 25,000 men—also French—assembling in reserve at Constantinople, in all 70,000* men, under the personal command of the Emperor or such person as he might appoint.

So far, our Government approved the suggested arrangements; and accordingly, after another Council of War assembled at Buckingham Palace (at which were present the Queen, the Emperor, Prince Albert, Marshal Vaillant, Lord Palmerston, Lord Clarendon, and Lord Panmure), there was framed a Memorandum recording the agreement thus reached. Lord Panmure duly signed the agreement by command of the Queen, and Marshal Vaillant by command of the Emperor.

Acceptance
by our
Govern-
ment of the
prelimi-
nary ar-
range-
ments;

as recorded
at Bucking-
ham
Palace.

III.

For the conduct of the field operations, the Emperor's proposals were these:—He proposed that

The Em-
peror's
plan of
campaign:

* Put in subsequent expositions at 65,000.

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IX.

his plan as regarded the "1st army of operation."

That not objected to by our Government.

The Emperor's plan as regarded the "2d army of operation."

Lord Raglan, at the head of the "1st army of operation," should move forward across the Tchernaya, "and, first of all, take and occupy the high ground "above Inkerman, including Mackenzie's farm."* Not aware that those Heights were by many deemed all but impregnable, our Government seemed to approve, and at all events, expressed no dislike of this part of the plan;⁽¹⁾ but did not of course prematurely, and without consulting Lord Raglan, send out any peremptory orders for carrying it into effect.

With respect to the task reserved for his "army "of Diversion," the Emperor's project was this:—By the marching of the 45,000 French troops withdrawn from before Sebastopol over a distance of some 70 miles, and the arrival of the steamers from the Bosphorus with the reserve force of 25,000, his army of 70,000 men was to be gathered at and near the distant port of Aloushta, on the south-east coast of the Crimea, was thence to reconnoitre the ground, was (if then the advance should seem feasible) to ascend from the shore to the mountains, to move up and over the shoulder of the lofty Tchatir Dag by way of the Ayen Pass, was thence to march on Simferopol, and at length, in co-operation with Lord Raglan (already victorious, on its left), was to overthrow all Russian forces collected on the north of Sebastopol, and so complete the investment.**

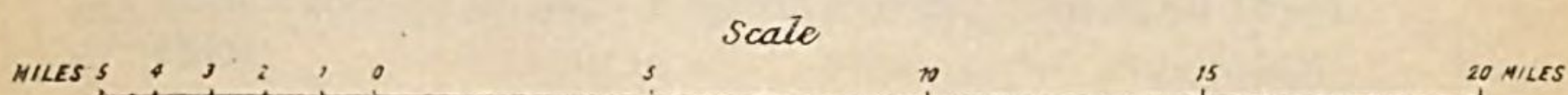
* So understood at the time by our War Minister. Lord Panmure to Lord Raglan, Private, 20th April 1855.

** Lord Panmure to Lord Raglan, Private, 20th April 1855. As will be afterwards seen, I have before me several expositions of the plan in its successive stages of development.



The Country between ALOUSHTA and SIMPHEROPOL
in illustration of the French Emperor's plan.

Consult also the Frontispiece plan.



If following this plan of campaign Lord Raglan should be storming the Mackenzie Heights, and the Emperor at the same time filing through the Ayen Pass with his "army of Diversion," the two commanders would be separated from one another by a mountainous and trackless region extending, even as crows fly, to a distance of some 34 miles, and substantially so prohibitive of transit that the readiest mode of communicating would be to send horsemen circuitously by a trebly long route. The idea of the "field telegraph," as applied to such conditions, was then unripe, and not brought to bear on the project.

By our Minister of War this last project was regarded as "perfectly visionary," as "a wild, impracticable cable scheme," and even as one that, if executed, would "lead to the inevitable ruin of his (the Emperor's) army";* but Lord Panmure does not say, and plainly it is not the fact, that he imparted his adverse opinion to Louis Napoleon. He seems to have calculated that, in the closer presence of realities, our imperial ally would abandon the more flighty part of the plan prepared for his "army of Diversion," and bring its left into contact with the right of Lord Raglan's field army; so that thus (after fighting and happily gaining a battle), the two forces acting together would effectually conquer their way to the object of investing Sebastopol.**

Although only a portion of the forces to be employed would consist of troops newly landed, the intended operation was to be one far dissevered

Opinion
formed by
our
Govern-
ment of
that last
part of the
plan.

General
purport of
the entire
plan.

* Lord Panmure to Lord Raglan, Private, 20th April 1855.

** Ibid.

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from the tasks of the besiegers, and perhaps on the whole might be called a re-invasion of the Crimea from its south-eastern coast—a re-invasion to be executed by 65,000 or 70,000 French troops, commanded by the Emperor or his lieutenant, and a composite force of 45,000 or 55,000 troops (English, French, Sardinians, and Turks) under the orders of Lord Raglan, making up altogether a strength for these field operations alone of from 120 to 135 thousand men.

IV.

The Emperor abandoning his intention of going out to the Crimea;

His letter of instruction to Canrobert.

On the 21st of April, the Emperor closed his visit to England; and in Paris a few days afterwards he abandoned his intention of going out to the Crimea.* By a letter of instruction to Canrobert, dated the 27th of April, he announced his change of purpose; and showed as one of its consequences that Canrobert (not replaced by his Emperor) would continue in command of the army, whilst Pélissier (not replaced by Canrobert) would command the Siege Army. With great elaboration and care—not omitting to explain his design for making a feint on the Euxine—he showed how he himself (as he thought) would have led the imagined campaign, and (not without vehement diatribe against the rival scheme of an advance from Eupatoria) declared his unabated approval of the plan he had formed. He fondly expounded it. He showed how he would dispense with a base of operations for his Aloushta

* *Not*, as M. Rousset imagined, *after* Pianori's attempt of the 28th, but *before* it.

campaign by not only putting eight days' rations on the backs of his soldiers, but also (in the way pointed out) bringing up more supplies from the west. Computing the garrison of Sebastopol at 35,000, and the Russian troops gathered on the north of Eupatoria at 15,000, he attributed to the enemy's field army between Simferopol, the Belbek, and the Tchernaya a strength of 70,000; but disclosed what was evidently his ruling idea—an idea that the conquest thus planned for his "army of Diversion" would or might take effect by surprise.⁽²⁾

In this later development of the imperial plan, the task assigned to Lord Raglan was declared (at the outset) to be still, as before, that of seizing the Mackenzie Heights;* but upon going into fuller details the Emperor forgot or ignored the earlier part of his exposition, and proposed that Lord Raglan should go on conducting a series of only preparatory operations until after the anticipated capture of Simferopol by the French, when—by virtue of processes more easy to dramatists than to generals engaged in "flank marches" under the eyes of a powerful enemy—he was to either advance in pursuit of the Russian field army then already compelled to fall back by the advance of the French in its rear, and to seize the "Old City Heights," or else find himself brought into contact with the "army of Diversion" victoriously advancing to meet him from the town newly seized. Then of course

* "S'emparer des hauteurs de Mackenzie."

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was to follow a triumphant co-operation of the two forces thus joining hands, and the whole of the enemy's field army was, as the Emperor expressed it, to be either driven into Sebastopol, or otherwise into the sea.⁽³⁾

Such, we know was the dream. But men versed in real war understood that the plan sought to break up an army of 180,000 men into three fractions so far disparted as to be incapable of affording to one another any mutual support, and next, so contrived that, supposing the enemy to be at all fairly served by his emissaries, his spies, and his scouts, two at least of the fractions thus separated would be brought into desparate peril, whilst the third—the one under Lord Raglan—would perhaps for a while be intact, and possibly even victorious against its immediate adversaries, yet find itself in the crisis so placed as to be unable to come to the rescue of either of the two other “armies” in time to avert the catastrophe.⁽⁴⁾

Whilst professing in terms to desire that his plan should be calmly weighed by Canrobert in concert with Lord Raglan, the Emperor nevertheless took pains to urge its adoption with almost vehement earnestness, and in doing so disclosed a strange confidence in his own untried powers as a strategist. “Such is,” so he wrote, “such is, my dear General, “the plan I wished to execute at the head of the “brave troops which you have hitherto commanded; “and it is with the deepest and the most bitter grief “that—forced by interests more weighty to remain “in Europe—I am obliged to renounce a plan in the “execution of which I am sure I should have suc-

“ceeded.* Consider it coolly with Lord Raglan;
 “and, although I do not pretend to be always right,
 “I cannot abstain from reminding you that, if Mar-
 “shal St. Arnaud had followed exactly the plan which
 “I traced out for him, we should now have Sebastopol
 “in our power, and the army would not have been
 “exposed to so much suffering.” **

Before this imperial letter had passed the sixth day of a journey performed by old-fashioned means, the injunctions it carried were destined to be outstripped, outdone, overpowered by words that flying more swiftly were also a great deal more wild.***

V.

By despatches brought out with the mails, and already in their hands before noon on the 3d of May, the French and the English Commanders were made acquainted with the general purport of the arrangements concluded at Buckingham Palace, and with the tenor of the Emperor's projected campaign, whilst Lord Raglan was also apprised of the opinion which our Government had formed of its merits, and of the prospect of superseding it by a more feasible scheme. He soon after received the Agreement drawn up at Buckingham Palace, with instructions to concur in the measures for carrying it into effect; and, the Paper containing a proviso that orders were “to be

3d of May.
The
Generals
in the
Crimea ac-
quainted
with the
imperial
plan.

* Made on the 27th of April, this the first mention of the Emperor's change of purpose was despatched by mail, but outstripped by the telegram to the same effect which we shall see reaching Canrobert in the night of the 3d of May.

** The Emperor to General Canrobert, 27th April 1855.

*** See *post*, p. 60-64.

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“given to Generals Canrobert and Lord Raglan to take the necessary steps for rendering their troops “available for the intended services,” it followed of course that those words when imparted to the two commanders were meant to be the rule of their conduct.

Owing plainly of course to some accident, this State Paper was not transmitted by the Emperor’s Government to the French Headquarters; but Lord Raglan imparted his copy of it to General Canrobert.

It resulted from the Agreement that General Canrobert (drawing plentiful aid from the Turks) was to relieve Lord Raglan in the English trenches, and Lord Raglan—set free from all the toils of the siege—was to make ready with all fit despatch for his promised command in the field.

The joy of
Lord Pan-
mure.

It was in a spirit of unconcealed exultation that Lord Panmure framed this announcement. From the day when he made, as we saw, a strange and ugly beginning of his task as War Minister, he had been learning every day more and more to see, to feel, to confess the true worth of the English Commander; and having spoken indignantly of what the War Minister wrote in his early despatch, I can all the more gladly commemorate the unstinted, the generous confidence he now reposed in Lord Raglan when entrusting him (as he believed he was doing) with the splendid task of undertaking a campaign against Russia on open ground, at the head of a separate army not less than 45,000 strong.*

* Secretary of War to Lord Raglan, Secret and Confidential, 23d April 1855.

VI.

How joyfully the English Commander and the army under his orders would have bidden farewell to the siege-works, and entered upon a campaign in the open, may be easily imagined; as may also of course the vexation of being mocked by an offer which could never be really made good. The whole plan was one built on a notion that (if only receiving the promised accession of Turks) General Canrobert could and would send away 50,000 of his French troops,* losing also the accustomed support of Lord Raglan's whole army, and in the truncated state thus attained attempt to hold the Chersonese and the ports of supply against the Sebastopol garrison, or rather, one may say, against Russia, because her field army could join (as indeed it had done at Inkerman) with the not yet invested fortress. Lord Raglan did not believe that General Canrobert would accept such a task.

The frail
basis on
which it all
rested.

In the day-time, however, of that Thursday the 3d of May which was destined—at night—to be stirring with almost mad orders from Paris, both Lord Raglan and General Canrobert might naturally enough understand that the elaborate plan of campaign submitted a fortnight before to the conclave at Windsor Castle was not so much a subject inviting to prompt, sudden action as one meet for subsequent study, and accordingly, until evening came, they were rather intent on the enterprise of which it is now time to speak.

* 45,000 to his Emperor, and 5000 to Lord Raglan.

CHAPTER X.

THE INTERPOSITION OF THE FRENCH EMPEROR CONTINUING AND BRINGING ABOUT THE RECALL OF A JOINT EXPEDITION.

I.

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Project for
opening a
passage
into the Sea
of Azof.

The Straits
of Kertch.

To open the fortified straits leading into the "closed" Sea of Azof, Lord Raglan adopting with warmth the eager counsel of Lyons had been pressing the French to concur with some of our land and sea forces in a joint expedition to Kertch, or, more explicitly speaking, to that long, bare, steppe-land peninsula which borrows its name from the town.

This peninsula of Kertch on the one side, on the other, a forked tongue of land jutting out from the coast of Circassia, approach each other so nearly that the waters there rolling between them are narrow enough to be reached by artillery planted on shore. Whilst sundering thus the two headlands, these waters unite the two seas and so form the straits giving entrance from the Euxine to what was the Palus Mæotis, that is, the Sea of Azof. Known of old as the difficult waters of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, they are now called the Straits of Kertch.

By seamen the straits were regarded as consisting of two distinct "Narrows"—the first one extending off ground adjacent to Cape St. Paul, and the other one off Yeni Kalé. The town of Kertch (Panticapæum, once the dwelling-place of King Mithridates) faces those somewhat broader waters which spread out between the two Narrows.

II.

The enemy had long been alive to the importance of keeping the straits firmly closed against the enterprises of the Allies, and had made great exertions to compass his object. Owing mainly to storms, and the strength of the currents, he had failed, it is true, in the strenuous endeavours he made to block the two narrow channels by either the sinking of ships, or the sinking of anchors, or resort to explosive contrivances, and his expedient of collecting an armed flotilla in the roadstead of Kertch was not one that strengthened him greatly against powerful navies. He had planted no artillery on the Circassian side of the straits; but along the opposite shore—the shore of the Kertchine Peninsula—where it faced and commanded the two narrow channels, he had established seven powerful batteries which effectually kept the straits closed against the ships of his adversaries. These batteries, whilst open in rear, were, each of them, also commanded by higher ground rising behind them which had not been fortified; and the way in which a Russian commander could hope to be able to protect them from seizure was by operating against the assailants with Horse, Foot, and Field-Artillery.

The enemy's endeavours to guard them.

On the whole, it appeared to result that, if there should spring up a conflict for the key of the straits, it would take the shape of field operations maintained in the Kertchine Peninsula.

This Peninsula jutting out eastward from the main of the Crimea is some sixty-six miles in length, The Peninsula of Kertch.

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and the isthmus, at its narrowest part, is not much more than ten miles across; though, if measured (as indeed has been usual) from the old fort of Arabat, on the Sea of Azof, to Theodosia on the Euxine, its breadth is doubly as great.

Baron
Wrangel
there in
command:
his forces.

Baron Wrangel commanded the forces in this Kertchine Peninsula, and they numbered not far from 9000;* of whom some 3000 were cavalry.** The infantry comprised two battalions and one company of troops of the line, the rest consisting of Fencibles—that is, Foot Cossacks—and what were called “local troops”—forces not at all approaching in quality to Russian troops of the line, and hardly, I believe, thought presentable on fair, open ground to good European battalions.***

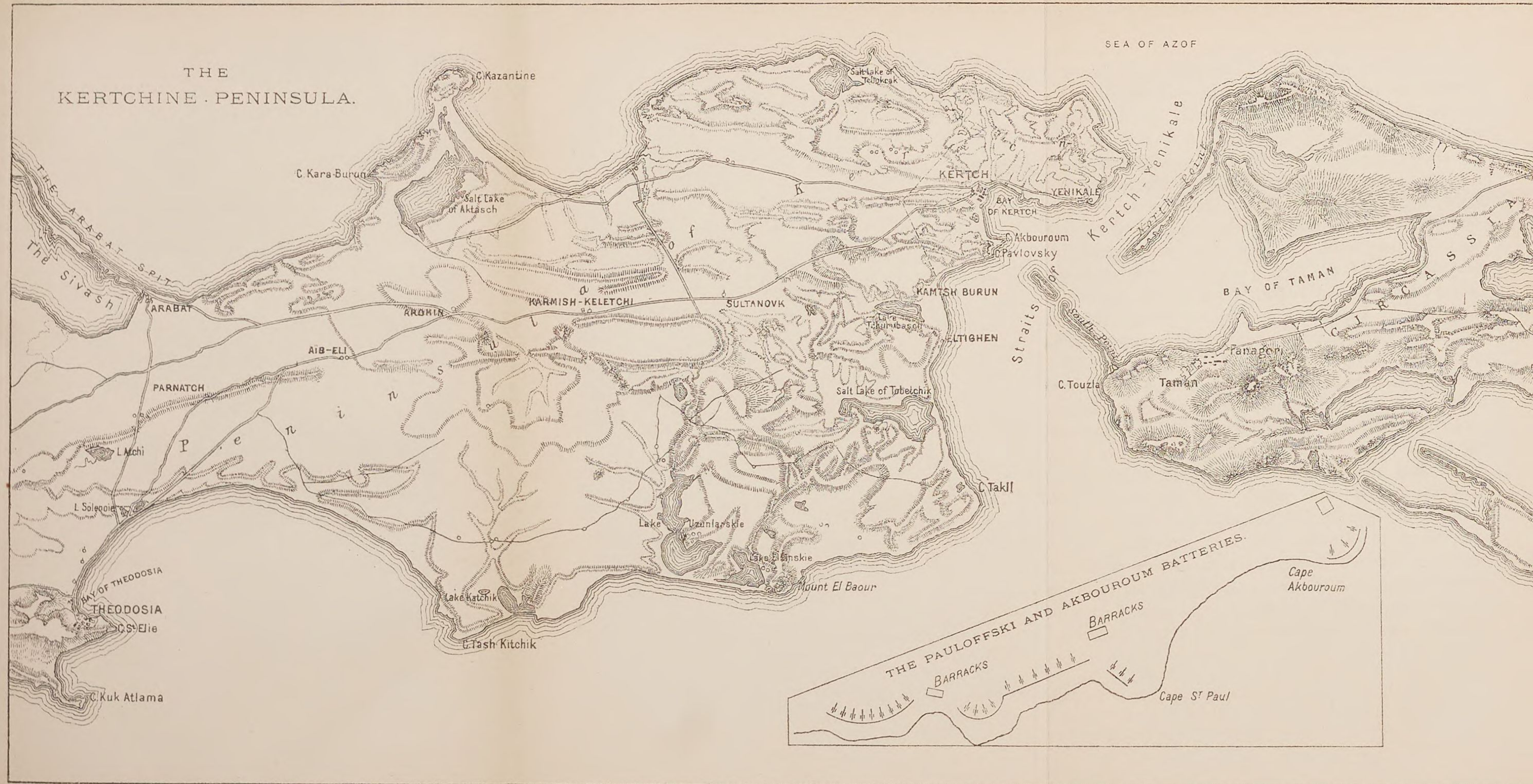
The task
set before
him.

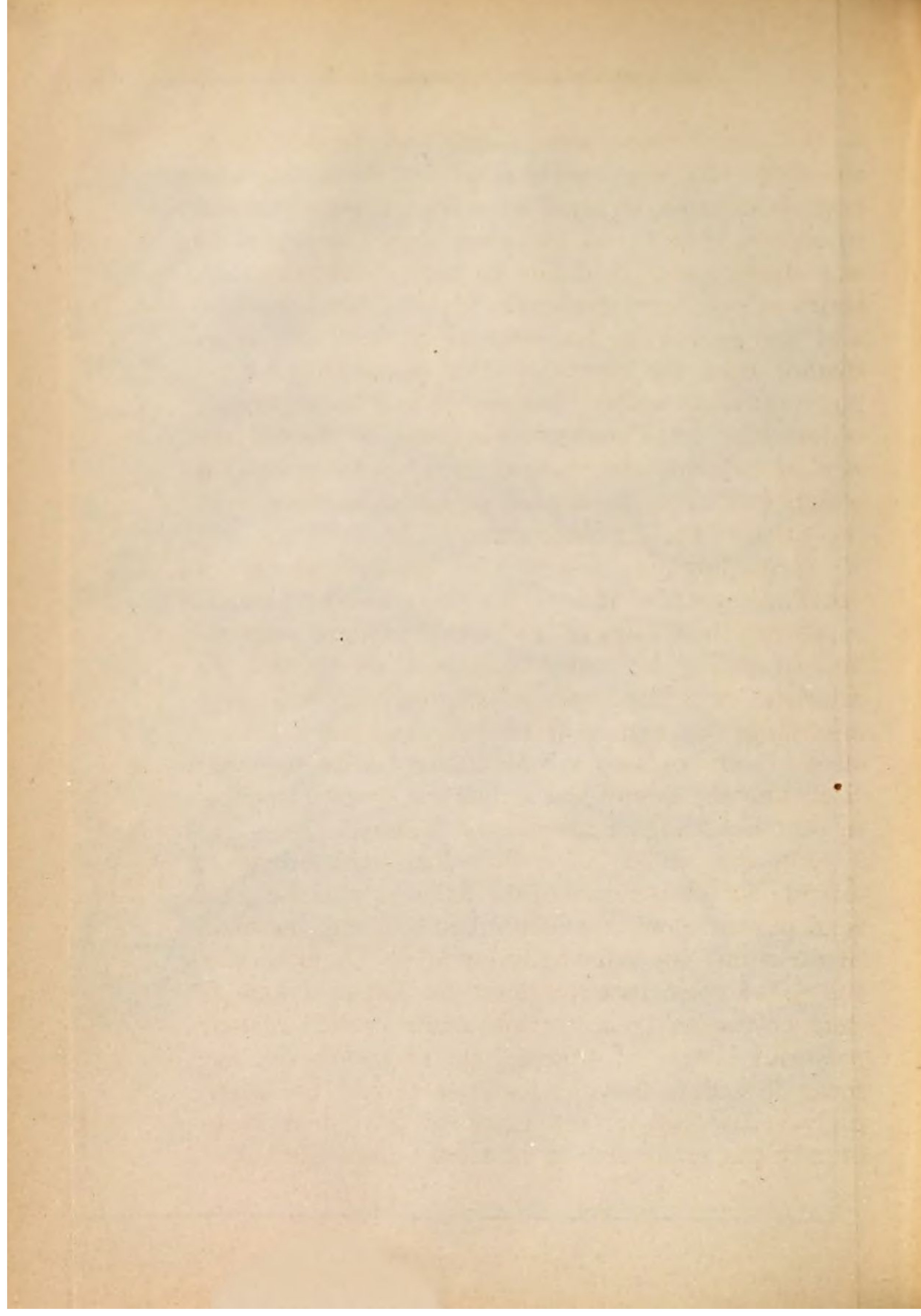
Approaching without toil or trouble under the wing of supreme naval power, and gliding along off a coast-line which offered several fit landing-places, the troops of the Allies could make feints, or commence real attacks at their pleasure. One excellent landing-place on the beach, not far distant from Theodosia, invited the Allies to make an attack on the isthmus. Another no less convenient on the beach of Kamish Boroune, attracted them towards what, we know, was their real object; for it offered a footing on shore at a distance of only four miles from the westernmost of the seven coast batteries.

* 8750.

** 1143 Hussars, 152 Horse-Artillery, and 1711 Cossacks.

*** The above details as well as those which follow are all based upon General Todleben's expositions, vol. II. p. 264 *et seq.*, and Appendix, 415 *et seq.*





Of course under these conditions, the defence of the Peninsula was embarrassed by conflicting exigencies. Baron Wrangel must have eagerly yearned to secure, if he could, the great object for which he was there, and accordingly to defend the coast batteries which kept the straits closed; but then also and on ground so far west as to be many miles distant from the centre of such operations, he yet more anxiously wished, and indeed had been specially ordered by his Commander-in-Chief, to defend the Arabat Isthmus, and the great road passing along it which gave him his means of communication with the main of the Russian army.

Regarding this last part of his task as one of great moment, he suffered his posts on the Isthmus to absorb three-fifths of his limited infantry strength, and (if quality be considered) much more, thus immensely curtailing, and substantially indeed quite annulling, his means of effective resistance to any strong body of troops which might seek to wrest from him the key of the straits by simply assailing in rear his string of seven coast batteries.

On the whole, it results that—abounding in anxiety for the defence of the Isthmus, and the great road passing along it which linked him with the main of the army—he reluctantly made up his mind that the seven coast batteries must be left in a state of defencelessness against attacks made in their rear by powerful bodies of troops. He of course did not mean to endure that the batteries should be insultingly seized without resistance by any small body of men put on shore—as in scorn—from the ships;

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and accordingly, whilst keeping his Hussars at Arghine within a distance of only some 30 miles from the landing-place of Kamish Boroune, he retained in the neighbourhood of Kertch four pieces of field-artillery, and a body of some 2500 men (chiefly Fencibles) of whom nearly 1900 could be spared to act as infantry;* but on the other hand, his adopted plan was to abstain from defending these batteries against an enemy disembarking in strength, and even to destroy them himself, as soon as he might perceive that they were about to be gravely attacked by soldiery either landing, or landed, on the neighbouring part of the coast.

III.

The eagerness of the English to have the attack set on foot:

General Can-

Amongst those who had considered this project, the French and the English alike were agreed that their land and sea forces co-operating in the measures proposed might put a great stress on the enemy by embarrassing his more easterly lines of communication, and cramping his means of supply; but our own people lured by an enterprise in which their Navy would act, whilst rejoicing besides in a prospect of carrying the empire of the sea to waters hitherto closed, were more especially eager to have the attack set on foot; and it was mainly, I believe, from his wish to meet this strong English feeling that on Sunday the 29th of April General Can-

* More exactly 1883, the rest being employed in serving the coast batteries, and other tasks confining them to particular spots. In this body of 1883 men only 133 were regular troops, the rest being "Fencibles."

robert in a spirit of friendliness agreed at last to the scheme.*

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X.

robert's as-
sent to it.

A too anxious commander is the natural prey of false "emissaries." Upon returning to his quarters General Canrobert there found awaiting him the report of an impudent spy who, whilst either so ignorant or so deceptive as to say nothing of the most conspicuous fact—Baron Wrangel's great strength in cavalry—made bold to declare that the enemy's infantry at Theodosia and Kertch alone had a strength of no less than 27,000; and, though Canrobert did not give his full credence to such an account, he allowed it to weigh on his mind. The next day, accordingly, he wrote anxiously on the subject to Lord Raglan.** At a later hour of the same day, he fell into a state very near to despondency. His imagination no longer content to dwell on the great strength in numbers with which it invested Baron Wrangel, went on to picture them concentrated, and whilst asking Lord Raglan's counsel, he declared it to be his own opinion "that the chances against succeeding in the enterprise were much greater than those in its favour."***

His sub-
sequent
doubts and
objections.

Lord Raglan thus answered: "The operation can only be undertaken on condition of its execution being immediate. The enemy is working at the task of barring the straits; and, if he were to

Lord Rag-
lan's mas-
terly an-
swer to
him.

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, May 4, 1855.

** Canrobert to Lord Raglan, 30th April 1855, first letter of that date.

*** Canrobert to Lord Raglan, 30th April 1855, second letter of that date.

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“succeed in completing the obstructions he is now
“raising up, we should have to abandon all hope of
“occupying the Sea of Azof—an object to which our
“Governments attach great importance. It might
“possibly have been well, if we had been able to
“spare more troops for the enterprise; but it is in
“rapidity of action, as it seems to me, that we shall
“find our best chances of success. Considering that
“we do not mean to establish ourselves in the Penin-
“sula of Kertch, but only by a *coup de main* to
“destroy the defences which prevent the passage of
“our ships, we may fairly believe that 10,000 men
“will achieve this result. The enemy’s numbers in
“the Peninsula may be greater, but they are not con-
“centrated; and, to effect a concentration, he would
“need more time than we should require for our
“*coup de main.*” * Then after showing in detail how
great (after landing) would be the advantages of the
Allies over the enemy in point of comparative
proximity to the batteries which had to be taken,
he ended by declaring his opinion that the projected
operation might be executed without incurring risks
other than the ordinary risks of war, and with
chances of success which, considering the importance
of the result desired, were sufficient to justify the
enterprise; but always, he said, on condition that it
be undertaken “without the least delay.” **

Canrobert
deferring
to Lord
Raglan.

General Canrobert replied:—“Since your Lord-
“ship notwithstanding the observations I felt it my

* Lord Raglan to Canrobert, 1st May 1855. The original
is in Lord Raglan’s always excellent French.

** Ibid.

“duty to make in my letter of yesterday is of opinion
 “that this enterprise undertaken with the troops be-
 “fore indicated presents itself with fair chances of
 “success, I hasten to say that I am giving orders for
 “the prompt embarkation of the French corps which
 “is to participate in it concurrently with the English
 “troops.” *

IV.

So at last on the 3d of May, there embarked upon this expedition from 10,000 to 12,000 troops, of which three-fourths were French and one-fourth English. The English squadron was commanded by Admiral Lyons, the French one by Admiral Bruat. The French troops were under the immediate direction of General d'Autemarre, but both that and the English part of the land-service force were commanded by Sir George Brown. Our people carried with them the all-precious light of sound knowledge respecting the enemy's dispositions and strength in the Kertchine Peninsula, and Major Gordon of the Royal Engineers whose admirable report had made clear the path of action was himself on board the flotilla in command of a body of Sappers. Together with the papers accompanying it, Lord Raglan's instruction to Brown was a model of lucid guidance.** It was believed that after rapidly accomplishing their tasks, the troops might be promptly brought back, and that no risk of harm would be run by with-

Sailing of
the expedi-
tion on the
3d of May.

* Canrobert to Lord Raglan, 1st May.

** A copy of this was enclosed in Lord Raglan's despatch to the Secretary of State, cited *ante*.

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X.

— drawing them for a very brief period from the Sebastopol theatre of war.

To mislead Russian scrutiny, the flotilla at first steered away as though making for Odessa, but assumed its true course after dark.

V.

The Sub-
marine
Cable.

But now, and even with suddenness, there began to interpose in the war that new and dangerous magic which has hugely augmented the already great powers of mischief conferred on an absolute ruler by carrying for him his orders with a speed so transcendent of space that, although perhaps the commanders to whom he is dictating action be men parted from him by distance extending over thousands of miles, he still may dare to look for obedience commencing from almost the hour in which—perhaps smoking the while—he lazily utters his orders to some Palace servitor, or himself writes down a direction to one of the telegraph clerks.

Where no electricity penetrates, a distant commander is able to tell his rulers at home that the clever instructions they send him are based upon a layer of facts which has long ago ranged with the past; but of course no such shield can be used where the magic “conductors” are working; so that, if there be the ripest experience, the amplest knowledge and wisdom, at one end of the cable, and at the other, mere folly, mere ignorance propped up by conceit and authority, it is the experience, the knowledge, the wisdom—now unshielded by Distance and Time—that may have in the clash to give way;

for wholesome jeers of the kind that after cruel disasters laughed down the old "Aulic Council," have been hardly as yet brought to bear with any sufficing severity on those who dictate by telegraph.

No one saw the grave dangers of electric communication more clearly than did the commander of the Emperor's Reserve at Constantinople. "They will be able," wrote General Larchey, "to send orders and counter-orders from Paris which will shake the command of the army." *

The Submarine Cable connecting the seaport of Varna with the shore of the Chersonese now came at last into full play⁽¹⁾; and our Government did not abuse it; but—exposed to swift dictation from Paris—the French had to learn what it was to try to carry on war with a Louis Napoleon planted at one of the ends of the wire, and at the other, a commander like Canrobert, who did not dare to meet Palace strategy with respectful evasions, still less with plain, resolute words.

VI.

The first message brought out from Paris by submarine cable was one of a wholesome sort; for it simply empowered—and did not command—General Canrobert to call up from Constantinople the Corps of Reserve; but the messages that rapidly followed were each of them strangely perturbing.

Telegrams
from Paris.

Between ten and eleven o'clock on the night of this 3d of May, General Canrobert came to the English Headquarters and informed Lord Raglan,

Night of
the 3d of
May:

* Quoted, Rousset, vol. II. p. 164.

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Can-
robert's
visit to
Lord Rag-
lan with a
new tele-
gram.

that by what was described as "an important tele-graphic despatch" newly come in from Paris he had received—not authority merely, but—positive orders to "bring up at once the army of Reserve from Constantinople, and for that purpose to send down without loss of time every ship he could place his hands upon to the Bosphorus—to detach as soon as these new troops should arrive a division to be landed at Aloushta, and moved from thence to the head of a defile leading to Simferopol, and thus threaten that town—to march a large body by Baidar towards Baktchi Seräi, and a third column by Tractir to the attack of Mackenzie's Heights, and, to enable him to make these movements in sufficient force, to bring half of Omar Pasha's army to this position from Eupatoria." *

This was ordering the subservient, yet painfully anxious Canrobert to go at once into a fit of strategic hysterics, and in that weakly violent state—after first too approaching Lord Raglan!—begin a campaign against Russia.

In the frenzy thus enjoined upon Canrobert, he was to become amongst other things a generalissimo—was to "march" Lord Raglan with the English army against the enemy in the field, and to "bring" Omar Pasha's army from Eupatoria!

Discussion
between
the two
comman-
ders:

With a smile, I am sure, in his mind, though not perhaps on his lips, Lord Raglan told Canrobert that the plan "appeared very complicated." After discussing it for some time, General Canrobert an-

* Lord Raglan to Sir Edmund Lyons, 4th May 1855, $\frac{1}{4}$ to 3 A.M.

nounced "that these orders of the Emperor would
 "compel him to recall the troops which had left
 "Kamiesh for Kertch." Lord Raglan observed that
 "such a proceeding would be a great misfortune,
 "and would create a bad impression" both in the
 army "and elsewhere," and "at last," he wrote, "I
 "persuaded" General Canrobert not to recall the
 troops "upon the understanding that he relinquished
 "his intention of doing so at my instance."*

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General Canrobert remained with his colleague
 till nearly one o'clock in the morning; and, when
 he had at last gone away, Lord Raglan was soon in
 that sleep with which nature blesses the weary, and
 especially a weary commander; but there had not as
 yet come an end to even this single night's revelry
 of the electric currents now inaugurating their
 turbulent mission. At a quarter past two, Lord
 Raglan was awakened by the arrival of a French
 aide-de-camp, bringing with him a letter from Can-
 robert, and another and later telegram newly come
 from the Emperor—from the Emperor acting in
 person. It was thus that the Emperor telegraphed:
 —"The moment is come for getting out of the 45
 "in which you are. It is absolutely necessary to
 "take the offensive 450. As soon as the Corps of
 "Reserve shall have joined you, assemble all your
 "forces and do not lose a day. I greatly deplore
 "my not being able myself to go out to the Crimea."

2.15 A.M.
Arrival of
aide-de-
camp with
yet another
telegram;

The confusion that well might be wrought by
 thus madly pelting with telegrams an already dis-

* "Sur ma demande." Lord Raglan to Sir Edmund Lyons,
 4th May 1855, $\frac{1}{4}$ to 3 A.M.

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tracted commander was a little augmented by failure in the use of conventional signs; for what had been meant by "45," and what by "450," the decipherers could not divine;⁽²⁾ but the interpreted words of these telegrams were so wild, so perturbing, that perhaps by comparison the two occult signs were not altogether unwelcome.

and letter
from Can-
robert de-
claring
himself

compelled
to recall
Admiral
Bruat.

Reception
of this by
Lord Rag-
lan.

The accompanying letter from Canrobert to Lord Raglan announced with strong expressions of regret and vexation that this last Imperial telegram made it impossible for him to let the French troops continue their voyage towards Kertch, and that accordingly he was sending a despatch-boat in pursuit of Admiral Bruat requesting him to return to Kamiesh. He added that he should feel very grateful if Lord Raglan would address the same request to Sir Edmund Lyons;* and Canrobert's aide-de-camp proposed that Lord Raglan should send his letter to the Admiral by the French despatch-boat; but Lord Raglan declined the offer, saying that for the task of imparting what had occurred to Sir Edmund he required a little time, and would send his communication by an English ship.**

With respect to General Canrobert's wish as expressed in his last communication, Lord Raglan was sternly reserved, and did not undertake to do more than convey to Admiral Lyons the terms of Canrobert's letter.***

* General Canrobert to Lord Raglan, ce 4 Mai 1855, 1 heure du matin.

** Lord Raglan to Admiral Lyons, 4th May 1855, $\frac{1}{4}$ past 3 A.M.

*** Ibid.

VII.

"I cannot say," wrote Lord Raglan to Admiral Lyons, "how deeply I deplore this unexpected interruption of an enterprise from which I anticipated not only success, but the most important consequences. My only consolation is that both you and I have done our utmost to forward an object which the Government had much at heart."*

But Lord Raglan gave more than condolence. Perceiving at once the wide scope of the mischiefs, the troubles, the dangers with which the Great Alliance was threatened by this French secession occurring—and perforce with publicity—in the midst of a warlike enterprise, he was not a man to sit moaning over such a "dispensation" without an effort of will to lessen or avert the misfortune; nor again was he one who, in such a condition of things, could fail to be thinking of our Admiral (Lyons) or of Sir George Brown—they were, both of them, his personal friends—now about to be overtaken at sea by the palsying words of arrest despatched to Bruat by Canrobert; and, though not of course wishing or meaning that, when they should see the Expedition deprived of three-fourths of its soldiery, the Admiral and the General should—in anger—go on, spite of all, with aims and plans wholly unchanged, he yet dwelt with evident wistfulness on a lurking idea that the two gallant men, upon learning the orders sent out to the French, might become passionately

Venture-
some
course
taken by
Lord Rag-
lan.

* Lord Raglan to Admiral Lyons, 4th May 1855, $\frac{1}{4}$ past 3 A.M.

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eager to reconnoitre the coast with a mind to seize any fair opening for the action of the truncated force which still would remain under Brown. The force numbered less than 3000, but these were prime troops: the Highland Brigade, some Rifles, some skilled engineers, 700 of the Royal Marines; and, considering that to the very utmost of naval competence, they would be eagerly supported by Lyons with his ships close at hand, what might not be done by such troops? It is true that Baron Wrangel was supposed to be holding the district with forces about 9000 strong, of whom some 3000 (consisting mainly of Fencibles) were believed to be in or near Kertch; but according to the latest Reports, his troops—far from having been concentrated—were established at distant posts. Was it not therefore possible, or even within the range of fair likelihood, that Sir George being stronger immeasurably than all the troops about Kertch, might complete the destruction of the coast batteries without being even molested by any force brought from a distance except perhaps bodies of cavalry with which he would know how to deal?

The latitude we are going to see granted was not destined to be used by Sir George; but to such as would know the true lineaments of Lord Raglan's magnanimous nature, the bare fact of his giving this warrant for separate action under circumstances so strange and—at first sight—so full of peril, will not be an unwelcome aid.

With rare boldness, with rare generosity, and with a carefulness for the honour and fair name of

others which was never surpassed, he framed a couple of sentences which opened a path of high enterprise for his chosen lieutenant to take upon the distinct responsibility of the commander-in-chief, yet—beforehand—raised up a firm barrier against all the impatient observers who might otherwise blame the lieutenant for not exerting his power.

The “two sentences” addressed to Admiral Lyons were these:—“I apprehend that, if the French troops which form three-fourths of your force be withdrawn, there can be no chance of your being able to proceed on the Expedition with a fair prospect of success, and without incurring a risk which the circumstances would hardly justify. Should you and Sir George Brown, however, after due deliberation, think it advisable to go on, and see what the state of things may be on the coast with the view to take advantage of any opening which may present itself, I am perfectly ready to support any such determination on Brown’s part, and to be responsible for the undertaking.”*

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The latitude he gave to Sir George Brown.

Thus Lord Raglan accomplished the task of giving his lieutenant full swing, yet relieving him beforehand from all risk of blame for the choice he might happen to make of either one or the other alternative.

VIII.

Detractors of course may pronounce that this warrant for separate action was the evident off-

* Lord Raglan to Admiral Lyons, 4th May 1855, $\frac{1}{4}$ past 3 A.M.

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spring of anger, and by natural consequence rash; nor can any deny to such critics the vantage-ground they will hold, when reminding us that the English Commander gave leave to push on the enterprise with troops having only one-fourth of the strength he himself and his colleague had agreed to allot for the purpose. But Lord Raglan at least based his daring on fairly accurate knowledge of the enemy's last dispositions.* This knowledge gave him a right to anticipate with something like confidence that our troops after landing in the eastern part of the Peninsula could be only encountered at first, if even encountered at all, by some 3000** troops of inferior quality which could have no pretensions to stand against any such forces as our Highlanders, or the Royal Marines, and that before the coming up from elsewhere of any strong bodies of Russians, our people (taking care against Cavalry, as already he had warned them to do) might complete their brief, simple task—the task of destroying or maiming a string of coast batteries lying all of them open in rear. Still, Lord Raglan, as we have seen, did not force the adventurous step on his lieutenant; and, though arming him with power to hazard it, did this only on condition that both he and the admiral with him should themselves feel impelled towards the enterprise.

* This I am enabled to say by comparing the knowledge as evidenced by the papers before me with the statements of General Todleben.

** The real number as we have seen being less—viz., 2572, of whom only 1883 could be spared for field operations.

That the granting of even this sanction was a venturesome act I do not affect to deny; but the enlightenment we have received since the morning of the 4th of May, when the letter to our admiral was written, gives us much better reason for confidence than people can generally have when speaking in the potential mood; for we see nearly all the conditions under which Baron Wrangel would have been called upon to act if Sir George in concert with Lyons had thought fit to go on with the enterprise;* and all that seems undetermined is a question how far the shoal waters would have suffered our navy to act—by either gunboats or otherwise—in repression of cavalry masses coming down the smooth slopes of the steppe, and undertaking to operate against our troops on the shore. But even supposing them safe against any fire from the sea, the Russian horse, if thus venturing, would have found themselves confronted by bodies of infantry which (duly forewarned as they were, against the attempted surprises of horsemen by Lord Raglan's thoughtful precaution) might be expected to prove staunch as rocks against cavalry charges, and well able to meet all such onsets with so steady a fire as would be likely to prevent the experiments from being too often repeated.

Turning thence to conjecture on the subject of infantry against infantry, we find on the one side, a body of 1750 Fencibles with only 133 men of the Line supported by four guns; on the other, the Highland Brigade, with 700 of the Royal Marines,

* See last footnote.

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with a battery of field-artillery, and besides a number of Riflemen, and a company of Sappers under Gordon, all contributing to make that choice body of less than 3000 men a formidable instrument of warlike power. Under conditions like these, there was no such approach to equality as could well raise a doubt of the issue. What however seems most likely is that not deeming himself to be insulted by the scantiness of a disembarked force which was, after all, greater in numbers than his own 1900 foot-soldiers, Baron Wrangel would have acted on his foregone resolve, and abandoned at once to our people the seven precious coast batteries which formed the key of the Straits.*

Thus inquiry, if conducted with care, goes far towards making it clear that Lord Raglan in giving the warrant was, after all, rightly inspired.**

Lord Raglan must have thought with great care of the state of effervescence into which our allies might be thrown, if the enterprise should be pushed to an issue in spite of General Canrobert's secession, and must seemingly have convinced himself that the effect of this resolute measure on the minds of the French would prove in the end to be good.

IX.

Return of
the expedi-
tion.

With the forces engaged in this Kertch Expedi-

* See *post*, "From the Opening of Pélissier's Command to the Death of Lord Raglan," chap. IV.

** The "enlightment" is more than commonly vivid, being not only furnished by Todleben's admirable expositions, but also by the actual experience deriving from the second Kertch Expedition.

tion all seemed as yet to be prospering. The conditions were such that a highly effective reconnaissance could be made from the sea. Captain Spratt looking out from the Spitfire, and Captain Le Bris from the Fulton, were able to reach a conclusion—now known to have been soundly based—that the success of the enterprise was likely to prove sure and prompt; but, when so nearly approaching the field of the contemplated operations as to be seen and duly reported from the Light-tower marking Cape Takli, the flotilla with all its keen hopes was overtaken at sea by General Canrobert's orders; and under the bitter compulsion thus put on the French, their Admiral—Admiral Bruat—obeyed the command to turn back. He moved slowly in order that Lyons, if also recalled, might the sooner overtake and rejoin him.

When Lyons, some hours later, received the letter despatched to him from the English Headquarters, he and Brown did not make up their minds to use that power of resorting to separate action with which Lord Raglan had armed them; and therefore our people soon followed the retrograde move of the French.

Next day—it was Sunday, a Sunday remembered with bitterness—the flotilla returned into port; and the thousands on board it brought back under such conditions as these were hurt, were aggrieved, were almost forced to know that some untrustworthy hand had seized for the moment a power to trifle with the armies and navies whilst busied in warlike enterprise.*

Feelings
excited by
its recall:

on board
the flotilla;

* Lord Raglan declared his belief that the feeling of dis-

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— only the facts without comment; yet the facts being such as they were, it reads like a pitiless charge against him who had sent the recall.

Amongst the myriads wondering at the recall of the flotilla were not only the enemy, not only the fleets and the armies, but also a multitude planted on the all-precious line of communication which connected the invaders of Russia with their homes in the West of Europe.

in Con-
stanti-
nople;

Apart from any ideas of Sultan, statesmen, diplomatists (all only adjacent dignitaries not mingling in streets or Bazaars), the Mind of the Imperial City, if in those days unmastered by judgment, and affording no trustworthy guidance to any mortals on earth, was still other than null, was still—if hardly enlightened, yet—after a manner suffused by the smouldering fire of Greek Intellect—was keenly, was loudly alive. Over-blest in her number of creeds, over-Babeled in her number of races, and customs, and tongues, brooding over the grave of one empire, and the bed—the sick-bed—of another, distraught between the East and the West, distraught between the Past and the Future, inarticulate, deaf to the reasoners, Stamboul all the more heaved with opinions, if not with Opinion, and was roaring with the voices of prophets. She commonly fed upon Rumour, but fastened, this time, on a truth—on the tidings of a

appointment endured by the men—French and English alike—was universal and deep.—To Secretary of State, Secret and Confidential, May 8, 1855.

Western flotilla returning, as in fear or in penitence, from before the Cimmerian Bosphorus. CHAP.
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We shall presently see, or infer, that the emotion of French troops encamped near Constantinople drew some at least of its strength from the murmur of the Imperial city.

The fleets and the armies of the Allies had met no reverse in arms. It was simply the message—the hysterical message—from Paris that, taking effect on an enterprise already begun, had raised the growth of scorn in their rear.⁽³⁾

The fleets on the coast, and the armies encamped before Sebastopol, shared the rage of the forces brought back, and this angry feeling extended with even augmented savageness to the Emperor's corps of Reserve assembled on the west of the Bosphorus; for these regiments lay so near Constantinople as to be reached, one may say, by the howl of the Imperial city; and, though guiltless themselves of all fault, they seem to have felt gravely wounded by what other Frenchmen had done. "All the world," wrote General Larchey, the commander of the French Reserve force at Constantinople, "accuses the electric telegraph of having caused the failure of the Expedition to Kertch from which the best results were expected.* . . . Rightly or wrongly, there is a general outburst of indignation at the counter-order of the Expedition to Kertch. Sailors and soldiers alike have been tearing themselves with rage."**

* How just this instinctive suspicion was we have seen.

** "Se sont rongé les poings." To the Minister of War. Quoted Rousset, vol. II. pp. 164, 165.

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The indignation of the fleets and the armies, whether English or French, extended to our people at home, and was fiercely expressed by our Government. Lord Panmure wrote:—"If he [General Canrobert] had refused his consent to the embarkation, "he might have been forgiven, but to recall an expedition after it has sailed, and to expose your "game to the enemy, shows him to be utterly incapable of high command or of weighing the results of so false a move as he has made. Well may "the army and fleet be disgusted. I only wonder "Bruat obeyed so desponding an order.* I never "will believe that the Emperor's instructions were "such as to leave Canrobert no discretion."**

The Emperor soon spoke for himself, and the tenor of what he alleged we shall presently learn; but first, we must hear General Canrobert, and then try to do him more justice than was possible in that angry time.

Can-
robert's ac-
count of
the recall.

In his telegram to the Emperor dated the 4th of May, General Canrobert, after stating that the Kertch expedition had started on the previous evening, went on to say this:—

"Your despatch of yesterday 3d May, 1 P.M. has "arrived. It compels me without losing a day to "send all the means of transport of the French fleet "to Constantinople. I am making the expedition

* Disobedience on the part of Admiral Bruat would have been mutiny, for he was under General Canrobert's orders.

** To Lord Raglan, Private, 7th May 1855. In several subsequent despatches Lord Panmure repeated strong expressions of his anger and disgust.

“return contrary to the advice of Lord Raglan, CHAP.
“and am proceeding to conform myself to your X.
“orders.”

It seems just to acknowledge that, if Canrobert really owed strict obedience to the Emperor's flighty commands, he could not have well helped recalling his troops from that Kertch Expedition, which, far from aiding at all towards the instant concentration of forces enjoined by his sovereign, was drawing off the French means of transport, and several thousands of men to serve for a while at some distance from the three allied camps. General Canrobert, it is true, went astray, but his error was one of old growth. It lay—not, as believed Lord Panmure, in any misconstruction of orders, but—in his then confirmed habit of undue subserviency to the will of a master who of course could have no just pretensions to be wielding his army from Paris.* Plainly not understanding at all that a general with allies at his side who would worthily command a great army in an enemy's country must perforce be a statesman as well as a soldier, he seems to have fancied that his duty of simple obedience was analogous to that of the Private expectant of the “halt!” or “quick march!”

The justice
due to him.

X.

It seemed that the wrath of our people was en- Letter
from the

* The Emperor himself once declared (though of course inconsistently with much of what he had done) that he had no such pretension. “Je ne prétends pas commander l'armée d'ici.” To Pélissier, 23d May 1855, quoted Rousset, vol. II. p. 192.

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 French Emperor — dangering all prospect of concert between the Allies; and in explanation of the course he had taken, the French Emperor addressed a long letter to our Ambassador in Paris:—

PALAIS DES TUILERIES, 7 *Mai* 1855.

in explanation
 of the
 course he
 had taken.

“MY DEAR LORD COWLEY,—I request you to bring under the full consideration of the English Government the bearing of the facts which I am going to state in a few words.”

Then after citing four documents with which we are already acquainted,* the Emperor proceeds:—

“You see then, Milord, that I have not countermanded the Expedition to Kertch, but that in the opinion of Canrobert this expedition is incompatible with the offensive movement against the Russians, and in this alternative, hesitation is not possible, for Canrobert says himself that on the 24th the state of things was too strained to allow of its lasting more than fifteen days. Also under date of the 6th of May midnight I have received a despatch from Canrobert to this effect:—‘The squadron has just returned; I am going to send all the disposable vessels to Constantinople. Lord Raglan awaits instructions from London for his concurrence in the field operations.’ Thus, then, the vessels which were to have gone to Kertch are now engaged in going to fetch troops at Constan-

* Viz., the letters of the 24th April from Canrobert and Niel, the telegram from the Emperor personally of the 3d of May, and Canrobert’s telegram to the Emperor of the 4th of May, mentioned *ante*, p. 72.

“tinople, and I strongly approve this determination
 “of General Canrobert.* The Expedition to Kertch
 “might have been advantageous at either an earlier
 “or a later time, but now, when the salvation of the
 “army before Sebastopol is in question, and that
 “this salvation can come only from a combined at-
 “tack on the Russians, it would be madness, as it
 “seems to me, not to concentrate all one’s means of
 “action on the principal point, and to take on one’s
 “hands a new expedition which, although useful,
 “would have no immediately decisive effect. I re-
 “quest you therefore to be very seriously urgent
 “with the English Government in pressing it to send
 “Lord Raglan precise orders, to the end that a
 “general attack may be made against the Russians,
 “and that, in these critical circumstances, not an
 “instant be lost.—Receive, &c.,

NAPOLÉON.”

The defence contained nothing dishonest; and indeed, it showed fairly the process by which this singular monarch had guided himself into error. First, by plainly misreading General Canrobert’s letter of the 24th of April, he had brought himself to believe that his army was in imminent danger. How was this to be met? Of course by his infallible remedy. Having long before made himself sure that his plan of campaign was the one road to victory and conquest, he then got to see in it also the one plank of safety by which to escape great disasters. Next—

Comment
on the
letter.

* He says:—J’approuve fort cette détermination du Général Canrobert.

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as though at the time in a frenzy of prophetic assurance—he complacently took it for granted that a telegraphed message from him would not only drive General Canrobert, but even Lord Raglan himself and all the gathered Allies, to clutch at “salvation” by the “only” way open, and enter at once on his travesty of the famous Marengo campaign. Thence it was that he had sent the hysterical telegrams which broke the rest of the Generals on the night of the 3d of May, and stopped short in mid-course a flotilla already in sight of the enemy.

CHAPTER XI.

THE EMPEROR’S DICTATION RESISTED, THE COLLAPSE OF HIS PLAN, AND THE RESIGNATION OF CANROBERT.

I.

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XI.

Canrobert
and Niel
proposing
considera-
tion of the
Emperor’s
plan.

THOSE telegrams which had the effect of arresting the Kertch Expedition were messages addressed to the object of pressing on the execution of the Emperor’s campaigning plan; and, whatever General Canrobert in his heart may have thought of the project, he was not strong enough to encounter it with even respectful evasions, still less to set it aside with a laugh, or an oath, as some other men might have done; whilst Niel was even so circumstanced that he could scarcely help trying to defend those Imperial notions which he himself, as we saw, had greatly helped to inspire.*

* See vol. XII. chap. v.

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Niel was not a bashful man; and on the 4th of May—the very morrow of Canrobert's secession from the enterprise commenced against Kertch—he came to the English Headquarters full fraught with the Emperor's plan. After amply expounding the project, he requested that Lord Raglan would discuss it with Canrobert. Lord Raglan did not respond. On the ground that he was still in expectation of the instruction which Lord Panmure had promised to send him, he avoided—at least for a time—the discussion proposed; but his opinion of the Emperor's plan was soon and decisively formed. "The project," he writes,—“the project of his Imperial Majesty appears to be open to many objections. It would divide the allied forces far more than is desirable, and throw a large portion of them into a country where from its nature the difficulty of communication between the several columns would be necessarily great, and where therefore the enemy might fall in great force upon one body without the one next it being able to render it assistance.”*

Course
taken by
Lord Raglan:his opinion
of the plan;

And reflection confirmed his opinion; for in reference to that part of the plan which committed the defence of the siege-works to 30,000 French and 30,000 Turks, he afterwards wrote:—“The trenches with the material in them would not be safe; and, should they be forced, the depots of Balaclava and Kamiesh upon which the existence of the allied armies depends would be exposed to great danger. The garrison of Sebastopol is estimated at from

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, May 5, 1855.

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“37,000 to 42,000 men. The troops on the north side consist of very large numbers, and a great portion of them might be so massed in the town as that they could fall with a superior force upon either the right or the left attack, without the one being able to assist the other.” Lord Raglan also said he should urge such a scheme as might seem calculated “to produce the desired result in the simplest and readiest manner.”*

and of
what would
be the right
course.

And this he well knew how to do. What Lord Raglan desired to achieve against the Sebastopol garrison was first to attack and reconquer the counter-approaches which still remained in their hands; whilst in reference to the plans suggested for completing the investment of the fortress, he preferred to all others a movement which, with competent aid, Omar Pasha might find means to execute by advancing from Eupatoria against the enemy's rear; and the Pasha himself approved a campaign of that sort, saying even that, to make good the task, he needed no help at all except some French regiments of horse.

Of the opinion of Canrobert, who had submitted himself, as we saw, to the government of General Niel's "Mission," yet was destined, after all his subserviency, to take a step roughly extirpating his mystified Emperor's Plan, I need not here speak; but in the French camp, a general of other quality was now fast attaining to a great meed of power.

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret and Confidential, May 8, 1855.

II.

On the 5th day of May, General Pélissier addressed to his Chief General Canrobert a letter so masterly, but also so masterful, that it became an event in the siege, and was pregnant with consequences. First, Pélissier laid it down confidently that with their then strength in numbers and their other advantages, the Allies were secure on the Chersonese from every great Russian attack. Next, he treated it as certain enough that in spite of all the interposed difficulty they could carry Sebastopol by proper siege operations. Next again, he declared a conviction that without too much turning aside in search of other expedients, the right course was simply to push the siege to extremity. Then boldly, but with consummate adroitness, he went on to deal with the contingency which would have to be met if the error (as he considered it) of resorting to field operations should be "inexorably" commanded by the Emperor. To comply in that case with the mandate, or to treat it at the least with an outward seeming of deference, he sketched a plan of campaign, which—since mentioning the port of Aloushta—might be said to have borne at first sight a kind of superficial resemblance to the Imperial project; but then he went on to show—to show with his Vauban in hand—that neither this his own plan, nor any other field operation, could be wisely or otherwise than rashly attempted without first confining the garrison to a strictly narrowed defensive, and reconquering, to begin with, all those of the counter-

Pélissier's
letter of
the 5th of
May.

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approaches which still remained in their hands. Though well knowing of course that, through Canrobert, he was substantially addressing the Emperor, he pressed this conclusion in language that might well be called peremptory.

Whole-
some bear-
ing of the
letter upon
the coun-
sels of the
Allies.

Now, whilst so pointed out by Pélissier as an absolutely needed preparative for any field operations, this measure of reconquering the counter-approaches was also the one he pronounced to be no less essentially requisite for duly pressing the siege; so that, whether the Emperor's instructions should be maintained or revoked, the course to be taken at once, unless Pélissier erred, would in either event be the same.* And this, as we have seen, was the very same course which Lord Raglan had already advised.

Corollary
resulting
from the
letter in its
bearing
upon the
Past.

Thus, supposing him to stand unresisted in the argument he based upon Vauban, Pélissier was paving the way for a happy convergence of opinion which would serve at the least to provide for the immediate future of the Allies, and—without contravening too flatly a sovereign's plan of campaign—might cause the preparatives made towards rendering it eventually feasible to be absolutely the same as those needed for pressing the advance of the siege. From reasons thus offering guidance for the immediate future there also resulted a corollary which applied with bitter force to the Past. If the reasoning was sound, it appeared that the way in which the Emperor had clandestinely prepared for the execution of his plan was in point of warlike

* Rousset, vol. II. p. 168 *et seq.*

expediency, so wildly, so glaringly wrong as to be almost the actual opposite of what skill and wisdom enjoined. Instead of turning his army on the Chersonese into "an army in waiting," and making it submit—almost shamefully—to the enemy's audacious encroachments, he, if primed with that knowledge of War which Pélissier now pressed upon him, would have, months ago, urged Niel and Canrobert to prepare for the due execution of his favourite project by peremptorily reconquering beforehand every one of the counter-approaches, and effectually confining the garrison to the strictest defensive.

Thus the Emperor was taught after all, that Honour would have been his best policy, and that such a sincere prosecution of the siege as would have kept him free from the guilt of disloyalty towards Lord Raglan would besides have saved the French army from that error of submitting to the counter-approaches which, if rigidly obstructive (so long as it lasted) to the advance of the siege, was also one that forbade the essentially needful preparatives for his own cherished plan of campaign; so that what to the cynic was "only a crime," and—still better—a crime undetected, now stood out exposed as a "blunder."

Pélissier's insistence on the policy of wresting the counter-approaches from the enemy's hands came specially well from a general who was fresh from the conquest of one of these strongly held Works;* and it was in the nature of things that he whose strong will had some five days before achieved the capture

Pélissier's
growing
ascendant.

* See *ante*, p. 8 *et seq.*

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of the Sousdal Counter-guard should be taking an ascendant over one whose relation towards the exploit of the 1st of May was that of a general who had only consented to the enterprise under violent pressure, and had afterwards even apologised to his Government at home for a victory implying deviation from the tasks of an "army in waiting."*

Contrast. Then again, the frank, manful, wise boldness which marked Pélissier's treatment of the Emperor's instructions contrasted superbly with the subservient attitude of the Commander-in-Chief towards his mischievous sovereign; and on the whole one may say that from after the administration of this powerful letter on the 5th of May, General Canrobert was an almost annulled, and Pélissier a conquering man.

Effect of
the letter.

III.

Exposi-
tions of the
Emperor's
plan now
before the
Comman-
ders.

Before the middle of May, the Emperor's letter of the 27th of April had reached both the French and the English Headquarters; as had also a new, though in most respects similar Exposition of his campaigning Plan.⁽¹⁾ At the instance of Louis Napoleon, our Government had been framing a set of instructions for Lord Raglan on the subject of the Emperor's Plan, but these did not reach him in time for the Council of the 14th of May, to which we shall presently come. They, however, were not at all needed. Lord Raglan knew the mind of his Government.

The duties
it assigned
to Canro-

From Louis Napoleon's abandonment of his intention to come out to the Crimea, and from the

* See *ante*, p. 12.

order providing that Pélissier should be in charge of the "Siege-Army," it followed that General Canrobert, if adopting the Imperial plan, would himself have to execute that imagined advance from Aloushta which the Emperor had intended to lead.

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XI.

bert and
Pélissier.

Omar Pasha, invited by General Canrobert and Lord Raglan to take part in their deliberations, came up for the purpose from Eupatoria; and on the 12th of May, the three allied Commanders met in Conference. Though not coming then to any resolve, they discussed at great length the Emperor's plan of Campaign.

12th May.
The three
allied Com-
manders in
Con-
ference.

As we saw, the opinions of both Lord Raglan and Omar Pasha had been adverse to the Emperor's plan; and each of them greatly preferred the idea of an advance from Eupatoria; but Canrobert, as seemed very natural, could not easily escape altogether from the pressure of his sovereign's will; and it was only by yielding a little in that direction that agreement could well be attained. Lord Raglan on the whole thought it was wise to humour the Emperor by consenting to an attack from the south, but took care nevertheless to reject all the more flighty parts of Louis Napoleon's plan.

Omar Pasha seemed to take the same view; and, when therefore on the 14th of May the three allied Commanders were again brought together in Conference, they agreed to make a forward movement from their right, and Lord Raglan brought Canrobert to engage that, instead of advancing from Aloushta upon Simferopol, he would place his extreme right at Baidar, and thence move on Baktchi

14th May,
renewed
Con-
ference.

Lord Rag-
lan pre-
vailing.

Agreement
as to plan
of field
operations;

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Seräi.* In such case, the task of Lord Raglan would be to advance on Canrobert's left, and storm the Mackenzie Heights.

but no
further.

So far, therefore, the Commanders agreed; but their hope of ever really engaging in this projected campaign was conditional on their making it harmonise with the still greater object for which they had not yet provided—the vital, the paramount object of maintaining the position of the Allies in front of Sebastopol and securing their ports of supply.

This condition they did not fulfil.

Adverting to the detailed arrangements by which the Imperial plan sought to meet this great exigency, and in particular to the agreement of Buckingham Palace, which stipulated that the positions held by the English army in front of Sebastopol should be occupied by French and Turkish troops, Lord Raglan asked General Canrobert and Omar Pasha how they meant to provide for the defence of our siege-works. The answers he obtained were positive. Both Canrobert and Omar Pasha declared “that it

Canrobert
peremp-
torily refus-
ing to
guard the
English
trenches:

“was impossible for them to guard the English “trenches.”** Omar Pasha assigned some reasons for his refusal; but—more flatly—“General Canrobert said he could not impose such a task on

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, May 15, 1855. General Canrobert did not admit to his Emperor that he had so far yielded.—Rousset, vol. II. p. 173 *et seq.*; but that he did in fact so yield is not only shown by the above despatch of the 15th, but also—and more pointedly—by the secret despatch of the 19th.

** Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, May 15, 1855.

“any portion of his army;”* “and thus,” continues
 “Lord Raglan, it became evident that the four Divi-
 “sions of her Majesty’s troops now engaged in oc-
 “cupying the trenches would have to remain on
 “that duty when any operations of an offensive na-
 “ture should be undertaken. I confess that this is
 “a great mortification to me.”**

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XI.Omar
Pasha also
refusing.The conse-
quences of
these re-
fusals.

Lord Raglan might well have felt pained when contrasting that great command in the field which the united Governments of France and England had agreed to provide for him with the task to which he found himself riveted by the absolute refusal of our French and Turkish allies to take his place in front of Sebastopol. He may even have felt disappointment. It is true that, when hearing at first of the Buckingham Palace agreement, Lord Raglan had smiled at the notion of Canrobert’s ever consenting (whether aided or not by the Turks) to hold the entire position of the besiegers without an English force on the Chersonese to share his anxious task; but the change which substituted for Canrobert so strong a man as Pélissier to hold the immediate command in front of Sebastopol may have led the English Commander to think or hope for a moment that the French (as enjoined by the plan) would really take charge of his siege-works.

The refusal of Canrobert and of Omar Pasha to take charge of the English trenches was substantially of course a rejection of the Emperor’s project,

Rejection
of plan.

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, May 15, 1855.

** Ibid.

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and besides of that modified plan into which Lord Raglan had changed it.

An
anomaly.

In this Conference of the 14th of May, it so happened—at first sight anomalously—that Lord Raglan—by concessions—was able to approach at some points towards the wishes of Louis Napoleon:* and that he who delivered the blow which destroyed the Emperor's plan was—of all men!—General Canrobert.

Can-
robert's
idea that
the English
army might
be split into
two.

When Canrobert reported these transactions to the Minister of War, he disclosed an idea that Lord Raglan might have divided his force into two distinct armies, leaving one in front of Sebastopol and with the other (supported by the Piedmontese contingent) undertaking to act in the field.⁽²⁾ To go and thus split up a body of some 25,000 English troops into two little far-sundered armies—dividing the diamond into halves!—would have been contrary to all policy, to all common-sense, and, one may add, to the dominant conception of the Emperor, who had not only made it a chief feature of his plan to keep the English army entire, but taken pains to augment its power by assigning troops of other nations to act with it under the same commander. "The British army," writes Lord Raglan, "is too small to be divided. It should act in one body."**

The Em-
peror's
plan ex-

A part of the havoc sustained by this ill-fated Plan when it reached the Crimea can be shown in

* By assenting to an attack from the south, and by undertaking to operate against the Mackenzie Heights.

** To Lord Panmure, Private Letter, May 1, 1855.

arithmetical figures. The Emperor's Palace-made reckoning had laid it down, as we saw, that, to guard the positions of the besiegers in front of Sebastopol, there were needed no more than 60,000 men, of whom one half might be French, and the other half Turks; but enquiry at the seat of war soon made it appear that the army or armies entrusted with this momentous charge should have a strength of 90,000—that is, a force exceeding the one which had seemed great enough to the planners in Buckingham Palace by no less than 30,000 men.* And again, the whole force which Omar Pasha now consented to leave in the south of the Crimea was less by 15,000 than the Palace computers had imagined or hoped it would be;** so that, after making these two corrections, and then beginning to learn what forces might be actually assembled for campaigning in the open field, the difference between estimate and reality would already appear to be one of no less than 45,000 men, and the next glance at these hard realities would show that of the 30,000 Turks who were to concur with the French in guarding the siege-works not a man would in fact be there present.

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XI.

posed to
contact
with reali-
ties;

with what
result.

There was no reason why the French Emperor

* A joint commission appointed by the three Commanders to inquire and report on this subject, recommended unanimously that the strength of the force remaining planted before Sebastopol should be 90,000.

** Omar Pasha was sending some troops to the Chersonese, but withdrawing others, and the upshot of his arrangements was as stated above. Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, May 15, 1855.

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XI.

should not have set himself free from the error of 15,000, and the two enormous errors of 30,000 each, before constructing his plan. If taking that simple precaution, he would have seen the imagined French Corps he meant to collect at Aloushta reduced all at once from 65,000 to a strength of but 5000 men.

When enquiry pushed close had thus shown that, to defend the position before Sebastopol and the ports of supply, there would be needed—not merely 60,000, as provided by the Emperor, but—90,000 men, that Omar Pasha, instead of contributing 30,000 men (as Louis Napoleon assumed) towards the work of the siege, would spare no troops at all for the purpose; and finally, when General Canrobert, disobeying his sovereign, refused to liberate the English army for field operations by taking charge of their trenches, there sank from under this project the basis on which it had rested, and the structure of course fell to pieces.

Statement
by Can-
robert that
he was
going to
take the
field.

The French Commander indeed reported to his Government that he and Omar Pasha would immediately prepare to take the field; but few, I suppose, can have thought that this second invasion of the Crimea—without an English army to share it—would be really undertaken by Canrobert.

Duration
of the harm
done by
General
Niel's
"mission."

Big with Louis Napoleon's scheme, the baneful "Mission" of Niel began, as we saw, to clog France in the first days of February; so that, when the design—meeting criticism at the seat of war—collapsed in the middle of May, its incumbency had

been keeping the siege in a state of impuissance for nearly three months and a half. CHAP.
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Nor even then—strangely enough—shall we see its effects wholly cease. The Emperor was never informed that his Plan, at the touch of realities, had collapsed in the way we have seen, and accordingly did not attempt to remove or break down the huge obstacles it had encountered at the seat of war, nor to build up anew calculations there roughly upset; but, as though he were walking in sleep, he still carried with him his dream, still went on vainly commanding that people would hear and obey it.

IV.

Whilst in conference on the 14th of May, General Canrobert was either fast reaching, or already had reached, the conclusion that, consistently with his sense of duty, he could no longer command the French army. General Can-
robert's
first en-
deavour to
rid himself
of the com-
mand.

Producing the Dormant Commission, he placed it in the hands of General Pélissier, and requested him to assume the command.* This Pélissier, with a plainly wise self-control, declined to do, maintaining that the instruction was only meant to be acted upon in the event of Canrobert's death or serious illness.**

General Canrobert, however, on the 16th of 16th May.
His second
endeavour.

* This step, as Pélissier said, was taken by Canrobert "five "or six days" before the 19th of May.

** I do not observe that this transaction was ever made known to the French Government; but General Pélissier imparted it to Lord Raglan. Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, 19th May 1855.

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XI.

His resignation tendered.

May, wrote by telegraph thus to his ruler:—"My health and my mind fatigued by constant tension no longer allow me to carry the burthen of an immense responsibility. My duty towards my sovereign and my country forces me to ask leave to deliver to General Pélissier, a commander of skill and great experience, the letter for him which I hold. The army which I shall quit is intact, inured to war, ardent, and confident. I ask the Emperor to leave me a combatant's place at the head of a simple division."*

Strange interposition of Niel.

General Niel must have felt that his "mission," and his claim to be superintending the ostensible commander-in-chief, were brought into jeopardy by a change which removed the docile Canrobert, and raised up in his place so strong a man as Pélissier; but acting, as may well be believed, under an imperious sense of public duty, whilst also perhaps somewhat eager to move, if moving at all, on the topmost crest of the wave, he was audacious enough to advise, nay almost, one may say, to enjoin the immediate withdrawal of one man, the immediate raising up of the other; for he telegraphed thus to the Minister of War: "*16th May, 10 A.M.*—Accept without hesitation the resignation of General Canrobert. He is very much fatigued. Answer by telegraph. General Pélissier is ready to take the command."**

Canrobert's command

In reply to Canrobert's letter of resignation, the Minister of War telegraphed:—"The Emperor accepts

* Rousset, vol. II.

** Ibid.

“your resignation. He regrets that your health is
 “affected. He felicitates you on the sentiment which
 “makes you ask leave to remain with the army. You
 “will command in it—not a division merely but—
 “General Pélissier’s Corps. “Give up the command
 “to that general.”*

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given up
 and trans-
 ferred to
 Pélissier.

General Canrobert accordingly handed over the command of the army to General Pélissier. Persisting in his wish to have only the lesser command for which he had asked, he was placed at the head of his old force, that is, the 1st Division.

In a letter to his Emperor General Canrobert pointed out several troubles as those which had caused him to give up the command, and he stated them to be these:—

Assigned
 causes of
 Can-
 robert’s re-
 signation.

1. The slight relative effect produced on Sebastopol by the excellent batteries of the Allies.

2. The disappointment of the hopes he had entertained of being attacked by the enemy on the reopening of the bombardment.⁽³⁾

3. The arduous difficulties encountered in preparing the execution of the Emperor’s plan—an execution rendered nearly impossible (according to his account) by the non-co-operation of the English commander.

4. The very false position in which he had been placed with the English by his sudden recall of the Kertch Expedition.

5. The exceptionally great fatigues moral and

* Rousset, vol. II.

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physical which he had never for an instant ceased to be undergoing for the last nine months.*

With respect to the first of the reasons adduced, we have seen that General Canrobert was in error; for over and over again the French and English batteries brought to ruin the works they assailed.**

With respect to the second of the reasons, we saw much of the cruel anxiety suffered by General Canrobert from an opposite cause—that is, from the not irrational and not therefore unwarlike dread of being brought to battle in an execrable position.*** He afterwards, as we have seen, represented himself to be longing for another Inkerman, but on what grounds I do not know.

With respect to the third of the reasons, we have seen that a main foundation of the Emperor's plan was his proposal to obtain the services of Lord Raglan and his army in the field by causing Canrobert to relieve him and them from all their siege duties, and that is exactly what Canrobert—in disobedience for once to his Emperor—peremptorily refused to do.†

To the untoward circumstances which constituted the fourth of Canrobert's reasons Lord Raglan attached great weight. "It is evident," he writes, "that General Canrobert has felt very uneasy since he recalled Admiral Bruat from the Kertch Expedition,

* To the Emperor, 19th May 1855. Quoted, Rousset, vol. II. p. 180.

** See vol. XII., the last sixteen pages of chap. VI.

*** See vol. XII., chap. IV.

† See *ante*, p. 84.

“and that he has been very much weighed down by
 “the anxiety this has occasioned him, and that he is
 “not sorry to be relieved from a responsibility which
 “had almost overpowered him.”*

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Whilst agreeing that the remembrance of his secession from the Kertch Expedition was a burthen on Canrobert's mind, one may also give weight to the twelve first words of his third reason, and withal to the now felt ascendancy of General Pélissier.

The letter of the 5th of May had dominion, and in every line seemed to show that the writer—not the recipient—was the man who plainly ought to command.** It is under this aspect that General Canrobert's surrender of the command to Pélissier seems loyal, patriotic, and wise. For the honour of the French army, it was necessary to shelter it from the dictation of an incompetent sovereign undertaking to wield it from Paris. To give it the shelter thus needed, and to confront a powerful enemy with the resources of his very own mind—a steadfast mind apt for war business—Pélissier was abundantly able; and, General Canrobert not having the gifts or the stern independence required, it followed of course that the change must be one of the most wholesome kind; but not the less was there merit in the resigning commander who forbade thoughts of “self” to prevent him from achieving a great public good.

The merit
of Can-
robert's
self-sacri-
fice.

Under the discipline of Pélissier's letter General Canrobert must at last have discovered that what he had mistaken for an honourable, loyal obedience to

The lesson
apparently
taught him
by Pélis-
sier's let-
ter.

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, May 19, 1855.

** See last letter of Pélissier's, *ante*, p. 79.

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the will of his sovereign was a noxious and unpatriotic subserviency which brought discredit on France, and endangered the repute of her army. He knew that what successful revolutionists are always the first to call "law" had directed him to obey the mere Emperor as distinguished from the Emperor's Government, and apparently knew nothing at all of that greater though unwritten law which commanded him to do no such thing. It was reserved for his successor to show how the commander of a French army should comport himself when put under stress of the meddling persistently attempted against him by a man such as Louis Napoleon.

Feeling of
the French
army to-
wards Can-
robert.

By his well-tried personal bravery, by his zeal, by his fervour and many good, warlike qualities he had won the esteem of his army; and this blessing had not been torn from him at the time of his resignation by any untoward disclosures. Unaware of his having concurred in that machination which had long kept the siege of Sebastopol in a state of semi-abeyance, they never, it seems, marked him out as the object of camp discontents, and were thoroughly in the mood to admire him when hearing of his honest resolve to exchange high and tempting command for simply a "combatant's place."

The "mo-
rale" of
the French
army under
Canrobert.

When Canrobert declared that upon resigning the command of his army, he left it in a state of high warlike ardour and confidence, he made an assertion which, although it had come to be true after General Pélissier's fights, might, if taken alone, prove deceptive, and lead men to think that the

army whilst standing confronted by a powerful enemy could long be kept in the fetters of General Niel's Mission without, for the time, losing heart.

The actual truth is that towards the end of March, the "baneful mission" of Niel had produced its natural effect on the French troops; and, although Lord Raglan himself had wisely refrained from writing on so tender a subject, our Home Government, drawing its knowledge from other sources, became very deeply concerned at what it believed to be the fallen spirit of Canrobert's army. Basing himself upon what were then his latest accounts on this subject, our War Minister thus wrote to Lord Raglan: "I think you may be quite sure now of the "Emperor's advent to the Crimea. He professes "that it is his desire to place the fullest confidence "in you, and to consult you as to all his plans. I "fear he will have great difficulty in restoring the "*morale* of his troops which from all . . . tells "me, is greatly shaken not only in the eyes of the "English soldiers, but in the estimation of the French "officers themselves. This is altogether a very painful state of things, and gives me great anxiety as "to the result of our present operations."*

Down to even the middle of April, the spirit of the French army was in such a condition that Rousset describes it thus: "The Russians were surprised and "joyful, the English disgusted, the French, to say "the least, astonished. One could no longer make "out anything about the conduct of this siege, of

* Lord Panmure to Lord Raglan, Private Letter, 16th April 1855.

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XI.

“these demonstrations of force ending always in the
“contrary, and men returned sadly into the labyrinth
“of the trenches as though destined never to leave
“it. There was—not discouragement but—a fatalist’s
“sort of resignation to orders and counter-orders
“alike. The very Turks of Omar Pasha did not
“render a more dismal obedience.”*

Soon, the vigour of Pélissier exerted itself so superbly against the wishes of Canrobert that the spirit of the French army was restored—was raised to a high pitch of warlike ardour on the 22d of April, and to a victorious sense of its power on the 1st of May when Pélissier, overcoming the resistance of his then Chief, attacked, and carried, and conquered the Soudal Counter-guard. It was therefore in spite of Canrobert, and by the happily over-dominant energy of his irrepressible subordinate, that the French army, proudly emerging from out of that state of depression to which the “mission” had lowered it, stood ready and eager for action.

Opinions of
Canrobert
expressed
by men in
authority.

The men in authority were swift, I observe, to appreciate the sacrifice implied in General Canrobert’s resignation; yet, even whilst expressing this sentiment, they did not conceal their desire to see the French army commanded by a more determined Chief. “General Canrobert,” wrote Marshal Vaillant, “is a noble heart.” . . . “I hope we are now
“going to advance more resolutely.”**

* Rousset, vol. II. p. 145. What gives value to this statement is that the writer spoke with knowledge of all the most secret papers in the French War Office.

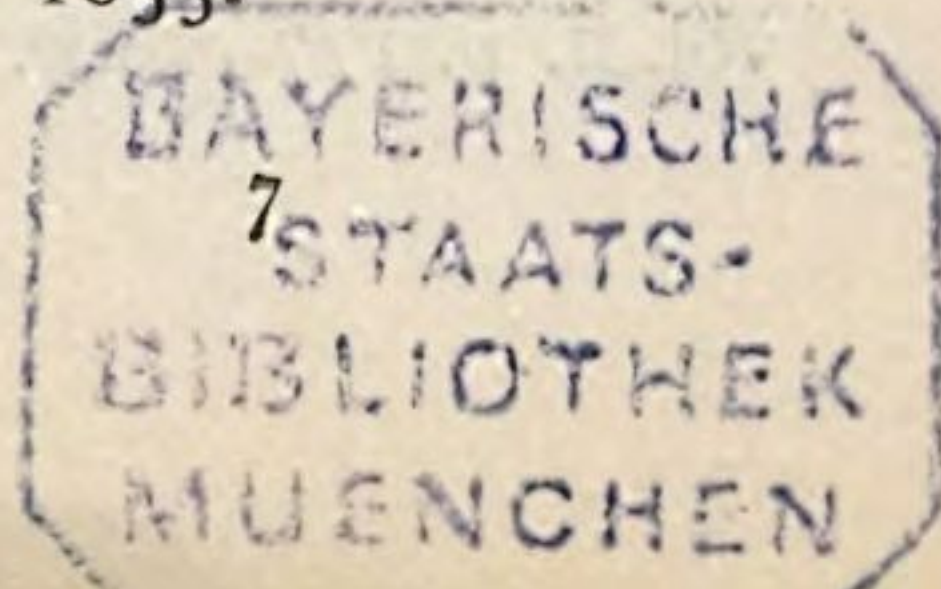
** To Niel. Quoted, Rousset, vol. II. p. 177.

Lord Panmure, after speaking of Canrobert's "vacillation and indecision of character," writes: "I am not sorry that he no longer fills a position to the responsibility of which he appears to have been quite unequal. Possessing in the most eminent degree all the qualities of courage and zeal which constitute the brave soldier, he did not possess those comprehensive views, nor that moral courage in Council, which mark a sagacious and resolute general."*

General Niel was not silent. Referring to the extraordinary letter in which he had reproved the Minister of War for not giving better instructions to Canrobert,** he now wrote to Marshal Vaillant: "I quite understand, Monsieur le Maréchal, that it must have seemed to you extraordinary that I should have addressed complaints to you of the silence which you observed towards the General-in-Chief on questions which were ceaselessly occupying him. Now, you have the explanation. He was bending under the burthen; and you will see that I must have gone through much embarrassment before determining to speak and act as I did." Then strange as it seems, General Niel proceeds to explain how it was that he had not before advised the removal of Canrobert!—"Certainly, I do not hesitate, where I see my line of duty clearly marked out; but in this case, I have long been in doubt as to that singular nature [the nature of Canrobert] which has so exactly the appearance of decision

* Despatch to Lord Raglan, 21st May 1855.

** See *ante*, p. 25.



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XI.

“when a resolution is to be taken a long time before-hand, and which always draws back when the moment for execution has come. He is a very worthy man.”*

Long afterwards, Marshal Pélissier (then Duke of Malakoff and Ambassador at the Court of St. James's) tried kindly, one day, to impart to me his estimate of the commander to whom he had succeeded in the Crimea, but did this on a plan so dramatic—he set up a kind of “lay figure” to represent General Canrobert!—that I cannot here trust myself to attempt a reproduction of the fervid, energetic performance by which he showed the immensity of the difference established by nature between his predecessor and himself.

Lord Raglan had perhaps been more troubled by the failings of Canrobert than any other man living, but he penned no severe, unkind word on the qualities of the retiring Commander.

Effect of recent disclosures on Canrobert's reputation.

The disclosures of a more recent time tend to lighten or rather divert the weight of blame thrown upon Canrobert by showing him to have lost his free-will since the first days of February, when Niel put him under the generalship of Louis Napoleon; and, although it be true that the attempt of this fanciful sovereign to govern from Paris the fight going on in Crim-Tartary was an abuse of monarchical power which Canrobert ought to have checked, just men, before wording their censure, will at least try to

* Niel to the Minister of War, May 18, 1855. Rousset, vol. II. p. 177 *et seq.*

gauge the predicament of a hapless commander who could only have shielded his army from imperial dictation by breaking or evading the law. CHAP.
XI.

CHAPTER XII.

THE RELATIONS OF AUSTRIA AND PRUSSIA WITH THE BELLIGERENTS.—THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS WITH RUSSIA.—THE AUSTRIAN PROPOSALS.—THEIR ULTIMATE REJECTION ENTAILING A CHANGE OF AUSTRIA'S POLICY.

I.

NONE must think that, because the war raged, Diplomacy had been all this while idle; but, to know the condition of things which the Conference of Vienna encountered in the spring of 1855, one needs must recur for a moment to rather an earlier time. CHAP.
XII.

When, as long since we saw, France and England at last declared war against Russia in the spring of 1854, both Austria and Prussia united themselves with the Western Powers—not indeed by engaging at once to take part in the physical strife, but—by preparing for the eventuality of having to take the field, by making together the treaty devised with that object, and withal by declaring in Conference that the delivery of the summons by which France and England had brought themselves into a state of war with Russia was a step “supported by Austria and Prussia as being founded in right.”*

The union
of Austria
and Prussia
with the
Western
Powers.

* Protocol of the 9th of April 1854. Treaty of 20th April

CHAP.
XII.

Its anomalous character.

It was anomalous of course that four Powers should be allied—for allied they were—against Russia, when two of them only as yet had come to be at war with the Czar, the other two simply announcing that they “supported,” and approved the course taken by their more adventurous friends. One can hardly deny that the part thus played before Europe by the two applauding States had an aspect in some degree comic; for, though both of them owned mighty armies, and though both were more closely aggrieved by the lawless act of the Czar than either of the Western Powers, they, whilst not themselves taking up arms, declared instead with solemnity—as though they were Grotius and Puffendorf!—that the conflict undertaken by others, that is, by England and France, was what teachers call “a just war.”

Still, in favour of this quaint proceeding there really existed some reasons which obtained and deserved no small weight; for statesmen perceived that by dispensing—at least for a while—with the armed intervention of Austria and Prussia they might narrow the area of the war, thus postponing, or even indeed altogether averting, that evil which the phrase of the time used to indicate as “a general conflagration in Europe;” whilst moreover there was room to believe that the Turks, and the two Western Powers, with, to aid them, the merely potential, the merely half-drawn sword of Austria, could effectually expel the

1854 between Austria and Prussia. See *ante*, vol. II. chap. XXV., and the Papers in the Appendix to that volume.

Czar's army from those Danubian provinces which he had seized as his "material guarantee."

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And accordingly, in spite of the plan which dispensed the two more aggrieved Powers from any immediate need to be taking up arms, the alliance of the four quickly proved that, so far as concerned the repression of that particular outrage which had brought on the war, these States could enforce their will against Russia in a high-handed, summary way.

Its efficacy
for the first
proposed
object.

Secured against the contingency of any Russian attack by the attitude of her Western allies, Austria had been able to approach the once haughty Nicholas with commanding and peremptory words.

By mere summons, without the necessity of having to strike a blow, she had soon forced the Czar to abandon his hold of the principalities, and to recross the Pruth; but also by convention with the Sultan she had been peaceably enabled to occupy the delivered provinces with her own troops, thus establishing—at least for the time—her authority on that Lower Danube which was precious as an outlet for not only her own dominions, but also those of all Germany. This, not only for Austria herself but also for Germany, and therefore also for Prussia (which could not but heed German interests) was a happy result—so happy, indeed, that, if Austria along with Prussia and Germany had obtained it as the fruit of a war victoriously waged against Russia, the achievement securing so full a measure of justice might well have been treated as "glorious." Yet, without themselves going to war, Austria and Prussia

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had been enabled to attain these advantages, because the Western Powers (but more especially France) had been, all the while, standing ready to come to their aid in resisting any measures of vengeance attempted against them by Russia.

Tendency
of this too
speedy suc-
cess.

The too speedy good fortune, however, thus wondrously blessing the German—that is, the non-combatant powers—had a tendency to weaken their union with England and France; for, since Austria and Prussia had already obtained what they sought, their new friendships in the West might grow cool. They were plighted auxiliaries who had received their great prize in advance, before being called into action; and, unless stayed by feelings of honour, might be tempted perhaps to desert.

The danger
increased
by another
cause.

Moreover, France and England soon showed that against the aggressor they meant to be aggressive themselves, and that their chosen plans of campaign would withdraw no small part of their forces to countries and seas far away, thus materially reducing their power to support German States in resistance to any invasion by Russia. It resulted that, after a while, the two great Powers of Germany which, though not themselves taking up arms, had still solemnly blessed the good cause of the Western belligerents, were less and less under motives for going to war with the Czar, and also less and less sure that, if once committed against him, they would have all the help they might need from their French and their English allies.

Under stress of the reasons thus tending to make them hang back, the two German Powers were put

to the proof of their loyalty, and one of them soon
fell away.

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Prussia—destined in later years to become a great, conquering Power, and the basis of a new, mighty empire—was then under the rule of a king—they called him Frederick William—who, although not endowed with the qualities for any such task, still kept in his very own hands the whole conduct of foreign affairs. His policy, if so one may call it, appeared to be in no degree shaped by any sense that he had of the duty attaching on Prussia as one of the five great Powers, and what he seemed to take for a guide was the mere composition of forces brought to bear on his mind by many and conflicting fears. Amongst these of course might be reckoned—for think of the ruin that followed on Jena and Auerstadt!—his lively fear of the French, with also his fear that, if tamely enduring the Czar's occupation of the Danubian Principalities, he would find himself deserted by Germany, and accordingly, as we have seen, he allied himself to the Western Powers and to Austria by the Protocol of the 9th, and the Treaty of the 20th of April.

The defec-
tion of
Prussia.

But when he saw France and England engaging their strength in the East far away from Berlin, those tremulous scales that he used for weighing fears against fears began to show a great change; for the separated armies of France were of course for the moment less terrible to him as enemies than when held together, and besides, as befrienders, less able to help him against the contingency of his being attacked by Russia; so that, visibly, his dread of the

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French now became on the whole less oppressive than his awe of the Czar; whilst also his fear that Germany would turn against him for acquiescing in a Russian occupation of the principalities came soon to an end; because their approaching deliverance from the grasp of Nicholas was then already in process of being secured by the valour of the Turks, and by the energy of Austria, co-operating with the two Western Powers.

No dread of the evils that come with the lowering of a Nation's repute appeared to find any place in the Royal collection of fears; and, if the king for a moment felt qualms at the idea of deserting those more warlike States which had virtually wrought the deliverance, he very soon stifled his conscience. Before the last week of July, Frederick William began to hang back, and then by fast degrees lapsed away into undissembled neutrality.* His defection of course made it perilous for Austria to fulfil her engagements, laid Germany everywhere open to Russian diplomatists, made it even a clear, tempting field for all their decomposing exploits, and soon broke up the Confederacy into Statelets so feebly united that, whilst some of them were consenting, there were others refusing to "mobilise" their respective armies, and one at least, if not more, that ingeniously found for its troops a happy medium state between being and not being summoned to

* See *ante*, vol. II. p. 187, and the footnotes in the same page. Prussia's first overt act of retrogression was a refusal to attend the Conference of the 22d of July, that had been summoned for giving effect to the Protocol of the 9th of April.

gather in arms—between standing up and sitting still.*

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The harm Prussia did to her late—now abandoned—allies, by laying Germany open to Nesselrode's emissaries, was of a serious kind;** for, in its then absurd state of multiplied sovereignties, the country offered intriguers a rich field of action; and the once famous Russian diplomatists had not yet been superseded, or robbed of their well-tried power by marplots ranting at Moscow.

Prince Bismarck, it seems, in referring to the origin and course of this war, has denied that his country was bound to take a part against Russia; and no one, of course, should say lightly that the great statesman erred; but, to weigh his contention with any advantage, it is essential to know, step by step, the policy he would have chosen for Prussia from the time when Austria, Prussia, and Germany being all of them treated as nullities, Moldavia and Wallachia were defiantly seized by the Czar.

The statesmen of Austria—in that respect like our diplomatists—have long been accustomed to govern their public acts by the dictates of personal honour; and, her honest, young Emperor clinging fast under difficult trials to sound patriotic designs, she at this anxious time was well steered through the numberless troubles besetting her by a Minister of commanding ability and invincible firmness. Against all the contrivances of Russia and her industrious emissaries, against the hysteric urgency of the Prus-

The loyal
course
taken by
Austria.

* Called "Kriegsbereitschaft."

** See the Official Diplomatic Study.

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XII.

sian king, against the ceaseless embarrassment of acting under an Emperor whose feelings, although he controlled them, still painfully clashed with his duties, against a formidable proportion—including perhaps the most powerful—of all his fellow-subjects, and finally in the opposite quarter against France and England when striving to draw him too far in the direction of their special desires, Count de Buol held his course with a steadiness, temper, and skill that never seemingly failed him throughout the long, perilous struggle.

Kept by this master-hand in the path of honour and prudence approved by her loyal Emperor, Austria did not forget the advantages with all the consequent duties that had accrued from her union with the Western Powers. Far from imitating the defection of Prussia, she armed at great cost for a war, and—though slowly—drew nearer and nearer to her Western Allies. Having previously declared, as we saw, her full, unreserved approval of the warlike course they were taking, she, in August, went on to record her concurrence in those four stated demands which, as France and England announced, they would peremptorily force on the Czar.*

II.

Step taken
by Austria
which
made a be-
ginning of
her media-
tion.

By way of warning to Russia, and therefore in the interest of peace, the Austrian Cabinet imparted to that of St. Petersburg the Protocol of the 8th of August with its statement of the Four Demands, and

* Protocol of the 8th of August 1854. The purport of the Four Conditions will be shown *post*, p. 115.

so not only made a beginning of that exceptional kind of mediation between the belligerents which she afterwards pursued, but also laid the foundation of what became after a while the "Conferences held "at Vienna for putting an end to the war."

The Czar at first did not deign to heed the warning from Austria, nor to act in any way on her statement of the Four Conditions which his adversaries meant to impose; and seeing this she drew nearer to the Western Powers. She negotiated with them a Treaty, engaging for herself that, if peace upon the basis of the Four Conditions should not be assured before the end of the year, she, in concert with England and France, would go on to devise measures fitted for attaining the objects of the alliance.

Course taken at first by the Czar Nicholas; and afterwards.

But since August, the months had been passing; and meanwhile, the once haughty Czar had listened with so much attention to the arguments adduced on the Alma, and afterwards repeated at Inkerman, that in a communication to the Austrian Government on the 28th of November, he all at once announced his acceptance of the "Four Conditions" as a starting-point on which to negotiate for putting an end to the war. He thus in effect sued for peace, and even undertook to accept it on the basis imposed by his enemies.

His acceptance of the Four Conditions.

This step on the part of the Czar did not hinder the Austrian Government from proceeding with the Treaty we saw them negotiate. It was ratified by the contracting Powers, and bears date the 2d of December 1854.*

Treaty of the 2d of December 1854.

* When yielding on the 28th of November, the Czar had

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Prelimi-
nary nego-
tiations for
the Con-
ference.

Prince Alexander Gortchakoff was sent by Russia to the Austrian Court as Minister Plenipotentiary; and in the last month of the year, France and England instructed their representatives at Vienna to confer with the prince on the subject of the basis proposed for peace negotiations. An informal meeting between Gortchakoff and the representatives of the three allied Powers took place on the 16th of December. The Allies, however, declared that they must be explicit in showing the interpretation they put upon the Four Points as drafted in the Protocol of the 8th of August, and—substantially—insisted that the conditions as there stated must be recast in the way they proposed. Accordingly in a Memorandum of the 28th of December 1854, communicated to Prince Gortchakoff by the Plenipotentiaries of Austria, France, and Great Britain, the Allies newly formulated their Four Conditions; but reserved to themselves a power to insist upon any other conditions that might afterwards seem to be required by the general interests of Europe.

It must be owned that this peremptory demand on the part of the Allies was exasperating, if not unfair, and the Russian negotiators appealed for guidance to St. Petersburg; but—whether really craving for peace, or for some other reason determined to let the Conference meet—the Czar at once fully acceded to the new formulation required by the Allies, and Prince Gortchakoff announced the decision at a

probably learnt that the Treaty of the 2d of December was impending.

meeting held for the purpose on the 7th of January 1855. CHAP.
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Great efforts were made by Russia and the small German States to obtain the admission of Prussia to the now approaching Conferences; but the Allies would only consent to these prayers upon condition that Prussia should engage to take part in the war if the negotiations for peace should fail.

The king would give no such pledge; and accordingly, to the horror and indignation of his relatives, and of numbers whose interests were closely bound up with his monarchy, he remained excluded from the Conferences.* His realm ceased in effect for the time to be one of "the five Great Powers"—not because it had lost any part of its physical strength, but rather owing to failings which brought its king into discredit. So low indeed had he fallen or seemed to fall, that there was even a question of calling upon him to agree that as a pledge for his future conduct he should suffer one of his fortresses to be occupied by Austria, another by France, and another again by England.**

Exclusion
of Prussia
from the
Confer-
ences.

When Nicholas died, many thought that the passing away of a sovereign who had personally brought

Question as
to the effect
of Nicho-

* For the diatribes levelled against him by his friends and connections at this cruel time, see Sir Theodore Martin's "Life of Prince Albert." There virtually sat on the king what the French call a "*conseil de famille*," and the tribunal, it seems, was not merciful.

** England was to be asked to occupy Dantsic. Our Government instantly rejected the suggestion; but it was one submitted for consideration on very high authority.

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las's death
on the pro-
spects of
peace.

on the war would be likely to accelerate its end; but some of those who had means of forming a judgment believed that the late Czar—well schooled by adversity—had not only resolved to make peace, if attainable on terms not derogatory to his sense of honour, but also—thanks to his habit of long-sustained absolute rule and to the dominating strength of his character—would have been perfectly able to enforce his will on all Russia against what might be the desire of many of his more warlike subjects; and again, as already we have seen, there was room for believing that the task thus regarded as feasible when undertaken by Nicholas, might be one beyond the strength of his son. Madame Lieven for instance pronounced that Alexander could not open his reign with an act of surrender or, as she fiercely worded it, cowardice.

The new Czar began his State utterances by making two public statements which violently clashed with each other. In a high-flying, loud manifesto he told his people that he was going in the glorious steps of Peter and Catherine. In another and quite sober statement, meant rather for non-Russian Europe, he through his Minister Nesselrode reminded mankind that his father had begun to negotiate for peace upon a basis then already accepted, and announced that he himself too would march in the path thus laid open before him.

III.

The Peace
Negotia-
tions at
Vienna.

Pursuant to this declaration and to the concurring assent of France, England, Turkey, and Austria,

a formal Conference was opened at Vienna on the 15th of March, under the presidency of Count Buol, the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, and at its first meeting, there were present for Austria, Count de Buol and Baron Prokesch; for France, Baron Bourqueney; for England, Lord John Russell and Lord Westmoreland; for Russia, Prince Alexander Gortchakoff and M. Titoff; for Turkey, Aarif Effendi.

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The Conference was afterwards joined by, for France, M. Drouyn de Lhuys, her Minister for Foreign Affairs, and for Turkey, by Aali Pascha, the Reis Effendi.

Of Count Buol I already have spoken.

As conceived at the time when Lord Clarendon gave him his instructions on the 22d of February, the mission entrusted to Lord John Russell—an illustrious name in England—was a charge of vast scope;* for along with the task of negotiating a peace, he, to meet the event of its proving that the war must go on, was to endeavour to strengthen the existing armed league against Russia by obtaining further accessions, and to concur in providing for what, as confidentially indicated, was made to seem nothing less than a fearless resettlement of Europe, thus ostensibly lending the sanction of our own Foreign Office to the dreams of Louis Napoleon.

Lord John
Russell.

Lord John first went to Paris without, it seems, gathering there any aid towards the objects in view. On reaching Berlin, he learnt that a bye-negotiation

* He did not at that time hold office. It was during the course of his mission that Lord John became Secretary of State for the Colonies.

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for a treaty between France and Prussia was then in progress; and, although nothing treacherous was intended by either State against England, the circumstance seems to show that both she and her French ally were wasting their strength in cross purposes.

The personal reception accorded to their illustrious guest by the king and his Government was most cordial; but Lord John soon perceived that at Berlin there were none of the ingredients needed for forming a league. Concurrently with a professed willingness on the part of the king to concede the supremacy of Germany to Austria, the feeling against her of both the sovereign and his minister appeared to be one of bitter and deep animosity. The king wished, Lord John saw, to avoid a war with either Russia or the Allies, and was so anxious to abstain from acts tending to commit him to the Western Powers, that, although resenting his exclusion from the Conference, he would not purchase his readmission by engaging himself to any definite course of action. The king declared that admission to the Conference was his right, and that those who had excluded him would repent of it. The king said he was not the adherent but the friend of the Czar, and that "as his friend" he had frequently given him unpalatable advice. He said he believed in the bottom of his heart that the Czar sincerely desired peace, and would make any sacrifice for it compatible with the dignity of his crown. On the whole, Lord John Russell thus wrote of the Prussian king:—"While pursuing a policy to the last degree selfish, "he gives himself the air of an injured prince, and

“assumes for his State a position ambiguous rather than dignified. His object evidently is to restrain Austria from acting on behalf of the Allies, and perhaps to induce the Western Powers to accede to such terms of peace as may be compatible with the interests of Russia.” The manful Prince of Prussia (afterwards Emperor of the great united Germany) was strongly opposed to the adopted policy, and tersely expressed his opinion of its banefulness by saying that, if Prussia were to join the Allies, there would be peace in a fortnight; but the fainter heart and the weaker mind of the king remained in the state we have seen.

Under conditions thus adverse, Lord John did not choose to present his credentials at the Prussian Court; and bidding farewell to the prospect of a general League, soon went from Berlin to Vienna.*

His task was thenceforth only twofold, that is, to negotiate for England in the approaching Conference, and meanwhile, if he could, to bring Austria into the war.

On Prince Alexander Gortchakoff as extant in the Conferences of 1855 one can hardly cast even a glance without more or less using the light which he many years afterwards threw on his own much exhibited character; and since it therefore seems necessary to make the allusion, one perhaps ought to add that despite what he had counselled and done, the man always remained in high favour with his sovereign and his country, thus acquiring some

Prince
Alexander
Gortcha-
koff.

* Lord John Russell to Lord Clarendon, March 1, 1855.

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right to protest that, except for being the foremost in a public declaration of ill faith, he was not more dishonoured than the Czar, nor more dishonest than Russia.

Committed in 1870, his offence does not fall within the range of this narrative.

It is with the negotiations of 1855 that I have to deal; and in those, so far as I see, the prince was not guilty of acting with falseness or undue craft; and his faults, as displayed in the Conference, were not even cognate to deceptiveness, being rather what seemed want of skill, want of mental resource, want of power to persuade or conciliate, want of even the much-needed power to keep his temper under control. A main part of his duty, of course, was to draw Austria towards the Czar, and detach her from the Western States; yet the process of exchanging ideas with an Austrian negotiator was the very one that more than all others provoked his ill-humour.

His subsequent career seems to prove that he needs must have had more capacity than he showed in the Conference-room.

M. Drouyn
de Lhuys.

M. Drouyn de Lhuys was a man of ability and very high personal character. Before traversing the Continent on his way to Vienna he had gone to London, and there exchanged ideas with our Government. From the first he proved anxious to frame such conditions as might either lead to a peace or bring Austria into the war.

Debates in
the Con-
ference.

Count Buol ably opened the Conference by a

brief, compact speech well designed for its object, and in words approved by all present, set forth the Four Conditions imposed by the Allies, and (in principle) accepted by Russia:—

“1. The Protectorate exercised by Russia over Moldavia and Wallachia shall cease, and the privileges conferred by the Sultans on these Principalities, as well as on Servia, shall henceforward be placed under the collective guarantee of the Contracting Powers.

“2. The freedom of the navigation of the Danube shall be completely secured by effectual means, and under the control of a permanent syndical authority.

“3. The Treaty of July 13, 1841, shall be revised, with the double object of connecting more completely the existence of the Ottoman Empire with the European equilibrium, and of putting an end to the preponderance of Russia in the Black Sea.

“4. Russia abandons the principle of covering with an official Protectorate the Christian subjects of the Sultan of the Oriental ritual; but the Christian Powers will lend each other their mutual assistance, in order to obtain from the initiative of the Ottoman Government the confirmation and the observance of the religious rights of the Christian communities subject to the Porte, without distinction of ritual.

“The development of these principles will form the object of our negotiations.” *

* Eastern Papers, No. XIII. I have preferred Count Buol's concise statement of the Four Points to the more wordy exposition furnished by the Memorandum of the 28th of December.

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After a labour of several days, means of giving effect to both the First and the Second Conditions were agreed to by all the plenipotentiaries, and there seemed to be a fair prospect of their proving able to deal no less happily with the Fourth Condition (if ever, indeed, they should reach it), whilst also they were able to come to terms upon the first part of even the Third Condition; but its latter words plainly ordained that means should be found for "putting an end to the preponderance of Russia in the Black Sea;" and this was the matter that promised to be the subject of lasting contention. By accepting the Four Points, Russia had committed herself to the principle of submitting to be deprived by some means or other of her preponderance in the Black Sea. What, however, those means should be had not been determined, and was the question to be taken in hand.

The Allies with a thoughtful regard for the feelings of Russia proposed that she herself should suggest the means of reducing her naval "preponderance" in the Black Sea; but Prince Gortchakoff suspected a snare; and (after a reference to St. Petersburg) she declined to take any such step.

There of course are two ways in which "preponderance" can be terminated:—by either taking weight from the heavier scale, or adding weight to the lighter one. The Allies proposed that the object should be attained by either entirely neutralising the Black Sea—that is, ridding it of all ships of war, except a few mere Police vessels—or else limiting the number of war-ships that Russia should there

keep afloat. On the other hand, Russia objected with great energy to both those plans, and then—no longer refusing to make suggestions herself—she offered some plans based on “counterpoise”—one for instance proposing to open the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus to all nations;* another enabling the Sultan to open the Straits whenever he might find himself menaced, and to reverse the “preponderance” complained of by calling up to support him the ships of any allies who might choose to answer his prayer.**

The Allies not accepting any plan of that kind, their difference with the Czar became sharply pronounced. Limitation or no Limitation of his Black Sea fleet was seen to be the question in hand.

Baron Bourqueney showed very ably that the plan of Limitation was only, after all, one providing that a fleet maintained on a closed inland sea should be on a peace footing.

Prince Gortchakoff of course, if so minded, might have declared the resolve of his Court with a dignified sparseness of words, and need not have sought to uphold it by any assignment of reasons; but—somewhat rashly—he urged (as if he were talking at Moscow) that to engage to limit the strength of the Russian fleet in the Euxine would be submitting to an infringement of the Czar’s “sovereign rights,” and thus subjected himself to the answer

* Annexes A and B to 12th Protocol. This plan was inadmissible; and, amongst other reasons, because it was wholly inconsistent with the Sultan’s ancient and most cherished rights.

** Annex to 13th Protocol.

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relentlessly inflicted upon him by M. Drouyn de Lhuys, who took care to remind the negotiator that that very Sea on which he claimed "sovereign rights" had as matter of fact been swept clear of the Russian flag, and brought under the full control of Powers at war with the Czar.* M. Drouyn de Lhuys might have added that, even when Russia was at peace with the Western Powers (though subject indeed to their anger) they had forbidden her the use of those very "sovereign rights," had ordered her war-ships into port, had taken good care to see the order obeyed, and had done all these things without provoking her Czar—a man not thought much wanting in pride—to meet their repressive authority with any Declaration of War.**

Lord John Russell gave point to his French colleague's argument by alluding to the future, and saying that the resistance of Russia on the question of Limitation would be obliging England and France to find the guarantees they required in a continued occupation of the Black Sea and the Baltic.***

To oppose that Russian contention which ascribed a kind of dishonour to the surrender of any "sovereign rights," Lord John Russell referred more than

* Eastern Papers, No. XIII. p. 58.

** So that the Czar if asserting in conference what his people called "sovereign rights," must have owned, when pressed to be accurate, that he referred to his *former* possessions. He could neither have appealed to the principle of the "*uti possidetis*," nor to that of the *status quo ante bellum*. Neither at the time of the Conference, nor in the winter preceding the declaration of war, was he master of the Black Sea.

*** Eastern Papers, No. XIII. p. 67.

once to the lessons of History, submitting for instance that Louis Quatorze had consented to the demolition of Dunquerque without its having been thought that in making the sacrifice for the sake of peace he descended from high estate; but Prince Gortchakoff was ready, this time, with an adequate reply. He acknowledged that a sovereign might be driven to such a concession after meeting an unbroken series of military disasters, but denied, as he had a full right to do, that Russia at the time of the Conference had been brought into any such plight. She had been vanquished in each of the battles; but her great Engineer had done much towards redressing the balance thus swayed.

The Western Powers maintained that, to content themselves with the "counterpoise" plan would be in effect to postpone the deliverance of the Sultan's dominions from the danger of Russian aggression, and would leave it to be achieved, if at all, in a more or less distant future, by other, if any, men and by other, if any, alliances.

In the face of even that argument, there is ground for maintaining that the "counterpoise" plan on the whole would have formed the best sort of protection to the Sultan's dominions;* but against the idea of substituting it, as the Russians desired, for a plan of Limitation there existed at the time of the Conference one fatal objection. The "counter-

* The Porte seems to have so judged in 1871, for it assented with apparent willingness to the change then made; and indeed so early as 1867 Fuad Pasha was willing that the Neutrality principle should be given up. Beust, vol. II. p. 106.

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poise" plan was not one that imposed grave restraint on the Czar, was not one that penally humbled him, and for that very reason of course would not fasten upon him the badge of acknowledged defeat, nor serve the Allies—like a trophy—to show abroad amongst men instead of a captured Sebastopol.

Compared
with the
mere ad-
duced
"reasons,"
the actual
stress of the
"motives."

The Conference being one carried on simultaneously with the strife on the Chersonese, it followed of course that the "reasons" adduced on each side by the disputants were only as chaff to the grain when compared with the weight of the motives—the motives derived from stern war—which, although not acknowledged in words spoken out between foes at a table, were still swaying every man in the Conference-room at Vienna.

There was one—only one—tract of ground (and this a tract not more extensive than many an English "estate") where the actual condition of things was such as to give the Czar strength in negotiating with his Western assailants. What humiliations by sea and by land he or rather his sire had been suffering one after another until the 25th of September 1854 we know and need not repeat; but then—as though heaven were granting that sagacious, old prayer which besought it to darken the minds of her enemies*—she saw her invaders abandon their conquests made on the Alma, saw them slowly descend from the vantage-ground of the Mackenzie Heights, saw them coldly "lay siege" to the more than half-open town left deserted (as they themselves saw) by Mentschikoff's fugitive army, and then day by day,

* Quoted *ante*, vol. IV. p. 193.

week by week, saw the genius of Todleben forcing them to expiate their hapless resolves; so that having first utterly wasted the precious fruit of their victories, they now, after six months of trench-work, stood faltering and baffled before him.

But this was not all, was not even perhaps the worst part of that distressing predicament in which the Allies had contrived to plant their now powerful armies; for, whilst failing to carry Sebastopol, and even losing ground in their efforts, they also, we know, were so circumstanced as to be unable to raise the siege. They, or more strictly speaking a part of them, which was not to have a less strength than 90,000 men,* stood picketed fast in the front of an uninvested fortress drawing men and supplies without stint from the powerful Empire of Russia, and held fast too on ground which no man, if he could help it, would ever choose as a battle-field. With forces thus not only baffled, but held in strict, perilous durance, the Western Powers of course were under strong, tempting motives, which, unless counter-balanced by any opposing reasons, might well make them look somewhat wistfully at a prospect of peace; and especially might this be the case with Louis Napoleon in those hours when he was not intending to lead his army in person; for his power of weighing on the Continent by means of an army in readiness for strife on ground nearer his frontiers was suspended, or immensely impaired by the exertions of power he had made and was making in a distant part of the world.

* See *ante*, chap. XI.

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So far, therefore, the condition of things gave strength to the Russian negotiators; but on the other hand, it must be remembered that—because unacquainted with that “Mission” of General Niel which was sheltering the Sebastopol garrison from all decisive attacks—they believed the Flagstaff Bastion, and with it the Fortress itself, to be in closely imminent danger; whilst also, we know, they were pressed by the grave, disheartening care of which I am going to speak. The effort required for sustaining this defence of Sebastopol by aid of troops marched from vast distances was one of a cruelly exhausting kind. The stress of the marches alone inflicted losses believed to have reached enormous proportions, and seemed destined to be always continuing until the siege should end;* so that Russia from that point of view might seem to be driven towards peace by painfully cogent motives; and, when known in St. Petersburg, the losses sustained by the Russians under the April bombardment would tend to load the same scale; but then again it appeared that the very excellence of the Sebastopol defence (which seemed of course even more admirable than it really was to those who believed that since February the place had been sincerely besieged**) put an obstacle in the way of her yield-

* The late Duke of Newcastle (who, however, since February 1855 had ceased to be War Minister) once imparted to me his estimate of the losses which the Russians *by their marches alone* had sustained. His estimate was so vast that I am unwilling to reproduce it.

** General Niel landed in the last week of January; but the

ing; for how to agree that the prowess which had hitherto saved, and still was maintaining the Fortress, nay, making it perform the exploit of holding its besiegers in duress, should so far, after all, go for nothing, as not to afford a good warrant for refusing consent to harsh terms?

The Allies having hitherto failed in their tedious siege; and being moreover entangled by their own hapless policy between the seas and the Fortress, might well be under strong motives inclining them to obtain a peace, if only they could do this on terms not offensive to their own self-respect; but considering all that had passed—the armies, the fleets, the great united armadas, despatched to far-distant shores in the face of a gazing world—it would hardly be possible for them to escape public ridicule if they were to end the war without either taking Sebastopol, or winning instead some advantage that could be shown to the scorers as a worthy equivalent for the fortress they had striven and failed to reduce.

On the whole, one may say that what seemed likely to govern the balance between peace and war were—not material interests, but—questions of war-like “honour.”

Of course, the resolves of Diplomats engaged in the Conference-room might well be from time to time swaying beneath the impulsion of tidings fresh come from the seat of war; but it so happened that the period occupied by the critical part of the negoti-
effect of his paralysing mission may roughly be said to have commenced with the month of February.

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tiation (from the 26th of March to the 21st of April), was not one in which events greater than a prolonged bombardment were occurring on the Chersonese Heights. On the other hand, it is true that during several months, the general tenor of the strife for Sebastopol had been bitterly disappointing to the Allies. Their armies—unaware of the cause—had long been under the palsy inflicted by General Niel's Mission, and their claims to dictate a peace ran counter, one cannot deny, to the almost ridiculous fact that (in the matter of gaining or losing ground) an ascendancy at the seat of war had been maintained—not, this time, by aggressive besiegers, but instead by an audacious garrison; for Canrobert, ever since February, had been more or less patiently submitting to the enemy's counter-approaches.

The Powers in arms against Russia could of course rest high hopes on the forces, now great in numbers, with which they were preparing to operate at the seat of war; but the critical period of the peace negotiations included a time when it seemed to be only too certain that the French Emperor, going out to the Crimea, would there command his forces in person. This measure—for two sets of reasons, some based on his absence from France, others drawn from the idea of his presence at the head of an army—was regarded as one of ill omen.

The young Czar desired peace; but in the face of Opinion at home growing up more and more into strength since the death of his sire, he did not venture to purchase the blessing he sought by any too

obvious surrender of what—inopportunately—his envoys were pleased to call “sovereign rights.”

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On the 21st of April, Prince Gortchakoff declared in Conference the persistent refusal of the Czar to limit his number of war-ships in the Black Sea; and thereupon Lord John Russell and M. Drouyn de Lhuys announcing that their instructions were exhausted, the negotiations directly maintained between Russia and the other belligerents fell into a state of abeyance, though the actual close of the Conference was delayed during several weeks.

Failure of
the Peace
negotia-
tions car-
ried on be-
tween the
belli-
gerents.

Writing to Lord Raglan from Vienna on the 23d of April, Lord John Russell said:—“I hope “you may succeed better in making war than I have “in making peace. The Russians have rejected our “propositions, and we would not hear of theirs. “There remains one faint hope from a proposition “to be made to our Governments by Austria, and it “is but a faint one, so we must look to your sword “to cut the way to peace.”

IV.

Anticipating that failure of the direct peace negotiations which took place on the 21st of April, Count Buol some three days before had been submitting for the consideration of the Western Powers three separate plans, all intended to meet the exigency of the Third Condition; and it was from the last of these plans—one originated by M. Drouyn de Lhuys—that Lord John derived the “faint hope” which we saw him impart to Lord Raglan.

The Aus-
trian pro-
posals.

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Allusions
to a sub-
sequent at-
tack on
Lord John
Russell.

Months later, when under the reign of a new French Commander the prospects of the war had been changed, and when none without study and access to much of what was then secret knowledge could acquire a true idea of the questions encountered in the previous April, a sudden disclosure of the reception accorded to Count Buol's proposals roused in England an outburst of anger against Lord John Russell—an outburst that sprang from the notion of his having tried to make peace on terms not sufficiently honourable to the Western Allies; and accordingly, whilst in close union with the rest of the Cabinet, and no less determined than they were to press on the war with due vigour, he all at once found himself marked, and singled out as the object of a great House of Commons attack—an attack by a concourse of men rightly eager to denounce any symptom of unworthy flinching in war-time, but ill supplied with the knowledge required for sitting in judgment on him whom they fiercely arraigned.

Compelled by reasons of State to observe on some subjects a well-guarded reticence, whilst also deeply moved at the sight of a planned insurrection against him led on by men prized as his friends,* Lord John met the storm of disfavour by resigning his office, and giving in the House what of course could be only an imperfect account of the grounds

* Those members of the Government in the House of Commons who were not members of the Cabinet—*i.e.*, those who did *not* know the truth—acquainted Lord John that they could not support him against the coming attack.

on which he and his colleague, M. Drouyn de Lhuys, had judged it their duty to act. CHAP.
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I am happily absolved from the task of examining the debate of the 16th of July, because it took place at a time beyond the set bounds of my narrative; but no such excuse can relieve me from the task of dealing with facts which occurred in the April before; and a feeling against injustice (whether caused by ill design or mistake), with besides, I may own, a regard for the memory of Lord John Russell, has made me imagine it right—not indeed to controvert his assailants but—to show the true import and bearing of the measure which gained his support, leaving others intent on the “Life” of a high-hearted English statesman to contrast the attack made against him in the House of Commons with what, as I say, is the truth.

The third of the three proposed plans which Count Buol had submitted was so far entertained by both the First French and the First English Plenipotentiary that Lord John Russell on the 18th of April was able to speak of it thus:—“M. Drouyn de Lhuys called upon me in the evening [the evening “of the 17th], and we drew up together a rough outline of the proposals to be made.” The Third
of the three
Austrian
plans.

“It will be seen that, supposing the second proposition to be rejected as well as the first, the value of the third depends on three things:

“1. Guarantee by all the contracting Powers of the territory of Turkey.

“2. A system of counterpoise in the Black Sea.

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“3. The limitation of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea to the number of ships maintained before the war, under pain of war with the Allies. I confess it appears to me that if this third system can be made an ultimatum by Austria, it ought to be accepted by the Western Powers. In saying this I may seem to contradict my former opinions. But in fact I do not retract those opinions. The system of limitation I believe to be far better than that of counterpoise. But the question is between an imperfect security for Turkey and for Europe and the continuance of the war.

“Should the Government of her Majesty in concert with that of France be of opinion that such a peace can be accepted, they will instruct Lord Westmoreland accordingly. If not, I hope to be allowed to be heard personally before a final decision is made.” *

At a later hour on the same day Lord John mentioned the reserve of Count Buol on the question which asked what Austria would do, if all her proposals should be rejected by Russia, and then added:

“If her Majesty’s Government should decide to accept any one of the three systems which the Conference can agree upon, I think they should insist that Austria should make the rejection of all three a *casus belli* with Russia.” **

It was only on that condition (which Austria,

* Lord John Russell to the Earl of Clarendon, 18th April 1855.

** A second despatch of same date from same to same.

although at first hesitating, soon resolved, it appears, to accept*) that Lord John entertained the proposal; and accordingly in weighing the measure, we must treat it as a scheme which, if leading under one supposition to peace, had also its warlike aspect.

The plan was one resting in part upon the principle of "Limitation," and in part upon the principle of "Counterpoise." For the avowed object of shielding the Sultan's dominions from Russian aggression, it was perhaps on the whole more effective than the plans which the Western Powers had put forward in the Conference-room;** and even as regarded the object of publicly humbling Russia, and winning in that way a "trophy" to show in lieu of Sebastopol, it was not altogether deficient; for, to prohibit the Czar from increasing the number and weight of his ships of war in the Euxine beyond a given fixed limit, was in principle nearly the same as forcing him to lessen their strength.

With respect to its bearing on the more immediate course of events, the plan showed alternative prospects:—it would either drive the Czar to make peace on the terms we have seen, or compel him to face a new enemy already in arms on his frontier.

To understand the bitter need that there was for bringing about some sharp change in the existing The deadlock in front of Sebastopol.

* "En nous engageant à la soutenir au besoin par les armes, une solution," &c. Count Buol to Count Colloredo, 20th May 1855, communicated to Lord Clarendon, and not by him on that point questioned. Eastern Papers, No. xv. p. 21.

** The experience of 1877 has a close bearing on every such question.

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condition of things, one must turn from Vienna to the Chersonese, and recall some idea of the state of the war at the time. When Lord John Russell penned his despatches of the 18th of April, the prospect of taking Sebastopol by dint of the siege as then constituted was judged to be beyond measure dismal.* General Canrobert, as ever since February, was still enduring the conquests wrested from him one after the other by Todleben's counter-approaches. It is true the great April Bombardment was day by day going on; but, there being, as we have seen, no resolve to follow it up by assault, the bark portended no bite. There was not at the time any prospect that (except by the coming of Louis Napoleon to the Crimea) General Canrobert would be superseded in the command of the French army.

The French Emperor and the English Government agreed in believing that Sebastopol would never be taken by means of the siege then on foot against the South Side of the place.** They hoped indeed that its ulterior fall might be compassed by successful operations in the field; but even over that prospect (which was only, after all, one dependent on the issue of a future campaign) there hung a dim, lowering cloud; for the command of the French army, and with it a dominant voice in the ordering of the intended campaign was, as then understood, to be exercised by Louis Napoleon personally; and this with a plan in his head which our War Minister pronounced to be "wild" and "visionary."*** What

* See *ante*, chaps. VI. VII. VIII.

** See *ante*, chap. IX.

*** See *ante*, *ibid*.

brightened this part of the prospect was only the gleam of a hope that plans which seemed absurd in design might perhaps be transformed into measures of wholesome strategy when encountering the test of real war. The Allies, we know, were so circumstanced that, whilst thus unable to carry the Fortress, they could not, if they would, raise the siege. What on earth could they do? Must they go on without any hope except the one based on a future campaign under Louis Napoleon's strategy, or else on the chance of a battle, if the enemy should be pleased to attack them in the execrable position they occupied with their backs to the cliffs and the sea? It may seem to be almost incredible, but still is strictly true, that powerful and victorious armies had come to be thus strangely hampered. The predicament was one that appealed—not surely for any weak yielding on a question of honour or principle but—

The need that there was for effecting a new move against Russia.

Knowing well that their armies lay thus strangely tethered and hampered in front of Sebastopol, the Governments of Paris and London were bound of course, if they could, to find and bring into play some new, some extrinsic force calculated to work the needed change; but either they did not observe the path of duty before them, or did not see how to pursue it. Yet the lever was ready, and only awaiting their touch. Far from having declared that they would not negotiate without first taking Sebastopol, they had chosen to say the contrary,

The lever to be found at Vienna.

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Neglect of
this by the
Rulers in
Paris and
London;

and for weeks, as we have seen, had been busily treating with Russia in the Conference-room at Vienna on the basis of the accepted Four Points; whilst also—and still in Vienna—they had at their side an Ally not yet plunged in the physical strife, but acknowledging his obligations under the Treaty of the 2d of December, and not only willing, but even indeed almost eager, to fix the easy conditions on which he would take the field. Yet with these means of action at their command, the Rulers in Paris and London did not even make any endeavour to use the power they held; and were so far from helping by statesmanship to ease the dead-lock on the Chersonese that they wilfully matched it by causing another dead-lock at Vienna.

but not by
De Lhuys
and Lord
John.

The First French and First English negotiators engaged in the Conference were, however, more alive than their Governments to the exigencies of the military predicament. M. Drouyn de Lhuys had the merit of conceiving and maturing the plan which—unless forcing peace on the Czar—would effectuate a mighty diversion in favour of the hampered besiegers; but Lord John also—always eager and strenuous—was not the man to stand idle, and see the Conference fail, without anxiously turning his thoughts to the armies besieging Sebastopol, and trying by a stroke of diplomacy to help them in what at the time seemed painfully difficult straits. In the effort to achieve this great good, he found himself able to act in close, friendly concert with M. Drouyn de Lhuys, and to agree with him in be-

lieving that for the objects they both had in view the Proposal in question was apt. What concession it exacted from the Western Power was—not so much concession to the enemy, but rather concession to Austria—concession made at her instance, and of that honourable sort which a belligerent may of course rightly make to a great independent Power when persuading it to join in a war.

Irresistibly cogent in either one or the other of the opened alternatives, this measure was so far from erring in the direction of weakness that it rather perhaps might be censured as offering too strong a remedy; for, supposing the Czar to resist this new pressure, the whole empire of the Danube would be brought at once into the strife; and, considering the defection of Prussia, there was some ground for saying that, to compass the armed intervention of such a Power as Austria, with its consequent extension of the area of the war, would be almost a ruthless act.* Be that as it may, the whole measure was at all events one which would either force peace on the Czar by the leverage of an Austrian ultimatum, or else, if he still should resist, bring Austria against him in arms.

The tendency and value of the measure.

On the question that asked which alternative would be the more likely to follow, opinions were not agreed. M. Drouyn de Lhuys and Lord John were both strongly inclined to believe that this measure, because sharply barbed with the Austrian ultimatum, would force a peace on the Czar; whilst

* This, *e.g.*, was the idea of Sir Edward Lytton-Bulwer, expressed in the debate of July 1855.

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Count Buol, with perhaps better means of forming a judgment, was rather disposed to conclude that the Czar would hold out, and bring Austria into the war;* but in one way or other the plan could not fail to take effect with great cogency.

If, instead of displaying this cogency, the measure had really been one which people understanding its import could honestly censure for weakness or undue concession to the enemy, it would not have found any favour with M. Drouyn de Lhuys, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, and would never have been harboured a moment in the mind of Lord John Russell.

De Lhuys.

Lord John
Russell.

Lord John, as all knew in his day, was a man of great intrepidity, was even from time to time rash, and prone to spring into action under simply spontaneous impulses that often enraged and distracted the anxious drill-sergeants of "Party," yet endeared him to those of our people who prefer, after all, a true man to any disciplined aggregate. He was capable of now and then coming to a bold, abrupt, hasty decision not duly concerted with men whose opinions he ought to have weighed; but for courage, for high public spirit, no statesman in Europe surpassed him.

Reception
of this plan
by Lord
Palmer-
ston's
Cabinet;

When Lord John returned to England on the Sunday, the 29th of April, he found his colleagues wholly unwilling to resume the negotiations for peace; and at a Cabinet held the next day, they avowed an unqualified reluctance to accept the Austrian plan; but it was necessary of course that

* Eastern Papers, No. xv. p. 30.

our Government, though desiring to act in that sense, should first take counsel with France.

And it proved that Louis Napoleon disagreed with the English Cabinet. On the 27th of April at the latest, and possibly two or three days before, he had found himself obliged to abandon his idea of going out to the Crimea; and thenceforth, it would seem, for a time he was anxious that the war should cease. "I don't know," he said to Lord Cowley, "what is thought of the English generals, "but ours seem to know little of European war, and "this double command is fatal."*

Accordingly, on the last day of April, the Emperor was in a good mood for listening with favour to his Minister, M. Drouyn de Lhuys, who had brought him back from Vienna what was called the Third Austrian Proposal, and now advised its acceptance as a measure that would secure what he judged to be a safe and honourable peace. The Emperor and his Minister examined the project together, made in it some changes which were afterwards pronounced to be wholesome, and determined that in this matured state it might be imparted to our Government as a measure approved by France.

Lord John Russell apprised of all this wrote from London to M. Drouyn de Lhuys:—

"MY DEAR COLLEAGUE,—I congratulate you on "the successful interview you had with the Emperor. "The plan has been made much more simple and "less objectionable. . . . We shall, however, deli-

* Senior's Conversations, vol. i. p. 338 *et seq.*

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“berate and decide to-day upon the propositions of your Government. It is the highest satisfaction to me that we have agreed, and, I trust, shall continue to agree, on the great principles upon which the future system of Europe is to be established.”*

Pronounced difference in the counsels of the Western Powers.

There was now therefore rife a clearly pronounced division in the counsels of the Western Powers; for, excepting its powerful member newly come from Vienna, the whole of Lord Palmerston's Cabinet was still as before keenly anxious to abstain from further negotiations, and firmly go on with the war; whilst—intent on an opposite policy—not only the French Emperor himself, but also his Minister for Foreign Affairs, and with them Lord John Russell, were, all three, desiring to accept the Austrian proposal, and make it the basis of peace.

The French Emperor and Lord Cowley.

After having matured the proposal in the way we observed, the French Emperor intimated his wish to see the English ambassador. Lord Cowley found the Emperor smoking in the garden, and was asked by him to “walk up and down with him, and talk the matter over.”

“I think,” the Emperor said, “that it is a good arrangement. What think you?”

Desiring of course to support the opposite opinion, as the one entertained by his Government, Lord Cowley answered: “Well, it does not appear to me that the Russian preponderance in the Black Sea will be materially affected.”

* 4th May 1855.

"Not," replied the Emperor, "by our having now
"a right to keep an equal force there?"

Lord Cowley briefly and ably adduced for his answer some arguments like those we heard used at Vienna against the "counterpoise" plan.

The Emperor replied: "I will talk the matter
"over again with Drouyn de Lhuys."

Speaking then from a sudden impulse, Lord Cowley made what was certainly a very abnormal suggestion, saying, "Would there be any objection
"to my being present?"

"The Emperor looked a little surprised, and
"then said, 'Certainly not;' and he appointed an
"hour for the next day."

A soldier of other days, a survivor of the Moscow ^{Marshal} campaign, now a Minister wielding the regathered ^{Vaillant:} power of France in another war against Russia, Marshal Vaillant was destined to utter the few magic words which would shape the then course of her history, overrule a new "Emperor Napoleon," and govern the march of events.

"When I arrived," says Lord Cowley, "Vaillant
"was in the antechamber, and Drouyn de Lhuys
"with the Emperor."*

The Marshal and Lord Cowley were soon introduced, and the Emperor begged Drouyn de Lhuys to explain the grounds of his arrangement.

Drouyn de Lhuys did so at considerable length.
"I think," said Lord Cowley, "that he talked nearly

* Senior's Conversations, vol. I.

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“half an hour. The Emperor seemed to go along with him, and, when he had finished, said to me, “‘Are you not satisfied?’”

“My only answer,” said Lord Cowley, “is to beg your Majesty to ask Marshal Vaillant whether he thinks that this arrangement will really effect the purpose of the war—the putting an end to the preponderance of Russia in the Black Sea and the Bosphorus.”

his words;

“The Emperor turned to Vaillant. ‘I am not a politician,’ said Vaillant, ‘but I know the feelings of the army. I am sure that if, after having spent months in the siege of Sebastopol, we return unsuccessful, the army will not be satisfied.’”

their sudden effect.

“The Emperor then turned to Drouyn de Lhuys and said: ‘Write to Vienna and break off the negotiation.’”

Thus in less than a minute the Emperor reversed his decision.

“All turned,” said Lord Cowley, “upon Vaillant’s presence. Louis Napoleon was pleased with the peace, and would have adhered to it, if Vaillant had not frightened him.”*

Resignation of De Lhuys.

Mr. Drouyn de Lhuys from the first had been closely identified with the measure thus suddenly discarded; and before the evening closed, he sent in his resignation. The Emperor wrote to his Minister, and asked him to reconsider this step; but M. Drouyn de Lhuys replied somewhat drily,

* Senior’s Conversations, vol. I.

and repeated his determination to quit the Government.*

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Because finding himself at variance with the rest of the Cabinet on the question of the Austrian proposal, Lord John Russell twice tendered his resignation to Lord Palmerston;** but when the Emperor's second decision was imparted to our Ministers, there remained, of course, no room for difference about the course to be taken by the then reunited Governments of France and England. Abstaining from further negotiations, they could not, as all saw, do otherwise than vigorously go on with the war; and, since Lord John agreed with his colleagues in the conclusion thus reached, he was left without a ground for insisting that his last resignation should be accepted. He continued to be a member of the Government, and of what from the 5th of May downwards was a closely united Cabinet.

Unaccepted resignations of Lord John Russell.

Unanimity after the 5th of May of the English Cabinet.

The Emperor's new and sudden decision brought him back all at once into what was substantial accord with the bulk of the English Cabinet; for, although he might thenceforth be fighting on the ground pressed upon him by Vaillant, whilst the English might hold that their object was still that of forcing on Russia the hated principle of "Limitation," the immediate resolve of both Governments was in each case the same. Both resolved to go on with the war.

The Governments of France and England once more in substantial accord.

Taking place, as we saw, on the 21st of April,

Opening for the new

* Both these notes were shown by the Emperor to Lord Cowley.—Senior's Conversations, vol. I.

** Lord Palmerston in House of Commons, 16th July 1855.

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policy sug-
gested by
Vaillant.

The sound-
ness of
Vaillant's
conclusion.

the suspension and virtual rupture of all direct negotiations with Russia had set free the Western Powers from their engagements to treat for peace on the basis assigned at Vienna. There accordingly was room for advice that tended to shape a new policy—a policy based in great part upon the feeling of soldiers; and perhaps one may own that of all the public men seeking to guide the two Western Powers at this conjuncture, the most clear-sighted was he who declared himself no politician. Inspired by his knowledge of what the soldiers were thinking, and not borne down by the cares of over-anxious diplomatists, Marshal Vaillant proved able to see that due warlike persistency in a long-pursued enterprise was the Greater, the true Essential, and that clearly the lesser object—to be afterwards, however, attained by first attaining the greater—was that of contriving a shield for the imagined Turks of the future by dint of parchments and words. He saw that France and England—France and England allied and in arms—could not meet the vast exigency of their repute among nations, or, as Frenchmen would say, of their “honour,” by coming home in the face of a bitterly scornful world with all their mighty armada, and a bundle of mere Russian promises to show abroad among men instead of a captured Sebastopol.

In effect, Marshal Vaillant's words prayed that the war should go on, without offering any new aid, as the Austrian proposals had done, towards the object of making it prosper; but the value of his counsel depended on reasons more lofty, more general

than those which only point to "expediency" of the humbler and narrower sort.

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It was otherwise of course with diplomatists discharging fixed, ascertained duties. When considering the Austrian proposal on the evening of the 17th of April, M. Drouyn de Lhuys and Lord John Russell were not free to harbour a thought of taking the soldier-like course which we heard Vaillant afterwards counsel. Far from having any shadow of warrant to act in such a direction, they had come to Vienna instructed to negotiate a peace on the basis then already laid down, and to bring Austria under engagements for joining at once in the war, if peace should not so be attained. Some may think, as I do, that for Powers like France and England, the simple, the manful insistence recommended by Vaillant was better than all the best meshes contrived by diplomatists; but we must remember that speaking in Paris after the virtual rupture of the negotiations, and only professing to breathe the sentiment of the army as distinguished from the opinions of politicians, the Marshal was free to advise on large and paramount grounds not open to men at Vienna in the middle of April who, like Drouyn de Lhuys and Lord John, had had laid upon them the task of negotiating a peace, without either awaiting the fall of Sebastopol, or insisting on its surrender by Russia as one of the terms to be dictated.

The course
of duty pre-
scribed to
D.deLhuys
and Lord
John.

Men plainly forbidden by Duty from acting on Vaillant's principle, and obliged to observe what I have called a "humbler" sort of "expediency," could not well fail to see the advantages of that "Third

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did.

“Austrian plan” which would either have forced on the Czar a better peace than the one for which France and England had toiled in the Conference-room at Vienna, or else would have brought against him—brought against him in arms on his frontier—a new and powerful enemy; but obeying the letter of their instructions which pointed exclusively to “Limitation” in exclusion of the “Counterpoise” principle, M. Drouyn de Lhuys and Lord John took care to keep themselves free from any approach to entanglement with the Austrian Government; and did no more, after all, than impart and recommend the proposal to their respective Governments.*

In what did they err? The mistake of that countless multitude which long afterwards brought down storms of wrath on the head of Lord John was caused, it would seem, in great part by the oddly refracting way, and wrong, inverted order in which events became known; for the rupture of the direct negotiations with Russia was soon after disclosed; whilst the Austrian overture of the 17th of April was—rightly—kept secret. The secrecy had lasted some weeks, and our Government and our people alike had gladly bidden farewell to all negotiations, and were simply intent on the strife, when an indiscreet statesman—not English—revealed the Austrian overture, affecting moreover to show, though not doing this at all perfectly, the action thereupon taken by Lord John Russell. The secrecy maintained by our Cabinet was wholly “State secrecy,” altogether

* Lord John even, it seems, abstained from telling the Austrian Government that he would take that last step.

disjoined from any personal wish for concealment entertained by Lord John; but people not seeing this fancied that they had made a discovery, proving him to have flinched at Vienna from what was the plainly right course. How far this was from the truth we have been able to see.

The chief cause of the mistake was, however, a sheer want of knowledge. In that time of war, ample reasons of State forbade the disclosures required for showing the truth, the whole truth.*

Of course, the same valid State reasons which enforced silence on the Cabinet sealed also the lips of Lord John; and accordingly his resignation did nothing towards giving him freedom of speech.

The House of Commons on the 24th of May entered upon a great debate on the subject of the war, including the Conferences, and (refusing to say with Mr. Gladstone that it still cherished hopes of peace founded on parleys open through Austria) came after many days to a vote which expressed its regret for the failure of the negotiations carried on at Vienna, and declared that it would continue to give every support to her Majesty in the prosecution of the war until a safe and honourable peace should be attained.

Vote of the
House of
Commons.

From the day, the 21st of April, when France and England declared their instructions exhausted,

The Con-
ference
kept

* No one, for instance, could discuss the policy of accepting the Austrian proposal without laying stress on the prospects of the Sebastopol siege; and this, of course, was not a subject with which to entertain the public—a public that included the enemy.

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formally
open until
the 4th of
June;

no real negotiation took place in the Conference-room; but allocutions intended to operate upon the opinion of Europe were there made on the 26th of April and on the 4th of June. Prince Gortchakoff on that last day made speeches which tended to show that his Government, though approving in the main of the Austrian proposal, would still always refuse to accept that part of its terms which sought—in a measure—to limit his master's "sovereign rights."*

If this were true, it would follow (as Count Buol had said he believed) that the acceptance of the Austrian proposal by the Western Powers would have drawn Austria into the war.

and then
closed.

On the 4th of June 1855, this long open Conference closed.

V.

Change
brought
about by
the rejection of the
Austrian
proposals.

Austria set
free to
change her
course.

When rejecting all the proposals put forward by Austria, France and England did more than forego the powerful aid she had proffered. They at once set her free to abandon that attitude of menace—armed menace—by which—without going to war—she long had been pressing on Russia. It then became plain to Austria that the Western Powers were going beyond what she had pronounced to be the just exigencies of the Four Points, and (by virtue of that discretion which they had taken good care to reserve) were continuing their war with a mind to either capture Sebastopol or else wring from the Czar such a cession of what his men called "sover-

* Eastern Papers, No. xiv.

eign "rights," as might serve like a "conquest" to show instead of the untaken fortress. Austria judged that under these conditions "the responsibility," as she called it, of going on with the war no longer attached on the Russians. She did not deny—no one did—that upon this matter, the question which asked how the Western Powers should deal with the obstinate fact that they still were defied by Sebastopol, France and England must judge for themselves of the course which their self-respect dictated, and go on with the strife, if convinced that this was what Honour required; but Count Buol rightly judged that, to aid them in the pursuit of an object so peculiarly their own, he ought not to involve his own country and bring it into a war—a war that must needs have been formidable even when she began to arm in the previous year, but had since been rendered trebly embarrassing by the defection of Prussia, by the ceasing of those Russian encroachments of 1853 which had given offence to Germany, and besides by the fact that, with mighty forces entangled in a far-distant region, France was hardly for the moment so able as she might otherwise be to support the Empire of Austria against encompassing enemies.

What defeated the efforts of diplomacy to end the war at this time was, in short, a point of soldierly honour arising from the frustration of efforts to carry Sebastopol; and the notion of assuming that Austria, who had had nothing to do with the siege, should be expected to act as a Power affected by

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XII.

The course
she rightly
took.

CHAP.
XII. — this special exigency, was of course altogether untenable.

Consistently with the new determination, Austria hastened to relieve her Exchequer from any further continuance of the burthensome sacrifices she had been making in preparation for war, and abandoned that attitude of armed menace which she long had maintained against Russia.

It was natural that this course of action, though no less right than wise, should provoke great impatience in England, and the more so perhaps since it happened that Lord Palmerston, then our Prime Minister, had long shown towards the much-challenged Empire of Francis Joseph a curious, persistent antipathy. With, however, a store of good humour which seemed inexhaustible, the now disarming Austria clung fast to the notion of her being joined to the Western Powers by some gentle sort of Alliance. Not fearing the High Court of Ridicule, she even gave them her blessing, and, whilst calmly receding herself from the perilous brink on which she had long been standing, she expressed a wish that kind Fortune might smile on her friends in the field.*

The steady, the accurate righteousness with which Count Buol steered his way through the sea of troubles he crossed was nothing less than a feat marked by wisdom, by skill, by a never-ceasing adherence to the dictates of honour; but, of course, proved immensely exasperating—for so human nature commands—to the belligerent powers; and besides,

* Eastern Papers, No. xv. p. 22.

there was theme for the satirists—intent on their
laugh — who could say what they liked of “the
blessing,” “the moral support,” quaintly offered to
eager combatants by a friend keeping clear of the
strife; but it still remains true that the course of
action taken by Austria in all these transactions was
thoroughly loyal and right.

CHAP.
XII.

FROM THE
OPENING OF PÉLISSIER'S COMMAND
TO THE DEATH OF LORD RAGLAN.

CHAPTER I.

THE NEW FRENCH COMMANDER AND THE PROSPECTS OF
VIGOROUS ACTION WHICH HIS LEADERSHIP SEEMED
TO BE OPENING.—THE STRENGTH OF THE BELLIGER-
ENTS.—THE PROBLEM AWAITING SOLUTION.—THE
RESOLVES OF PÉLISSIER.—THE IMPENDING STRIFE
BETWEEN HIM AND THE EMPEROR.

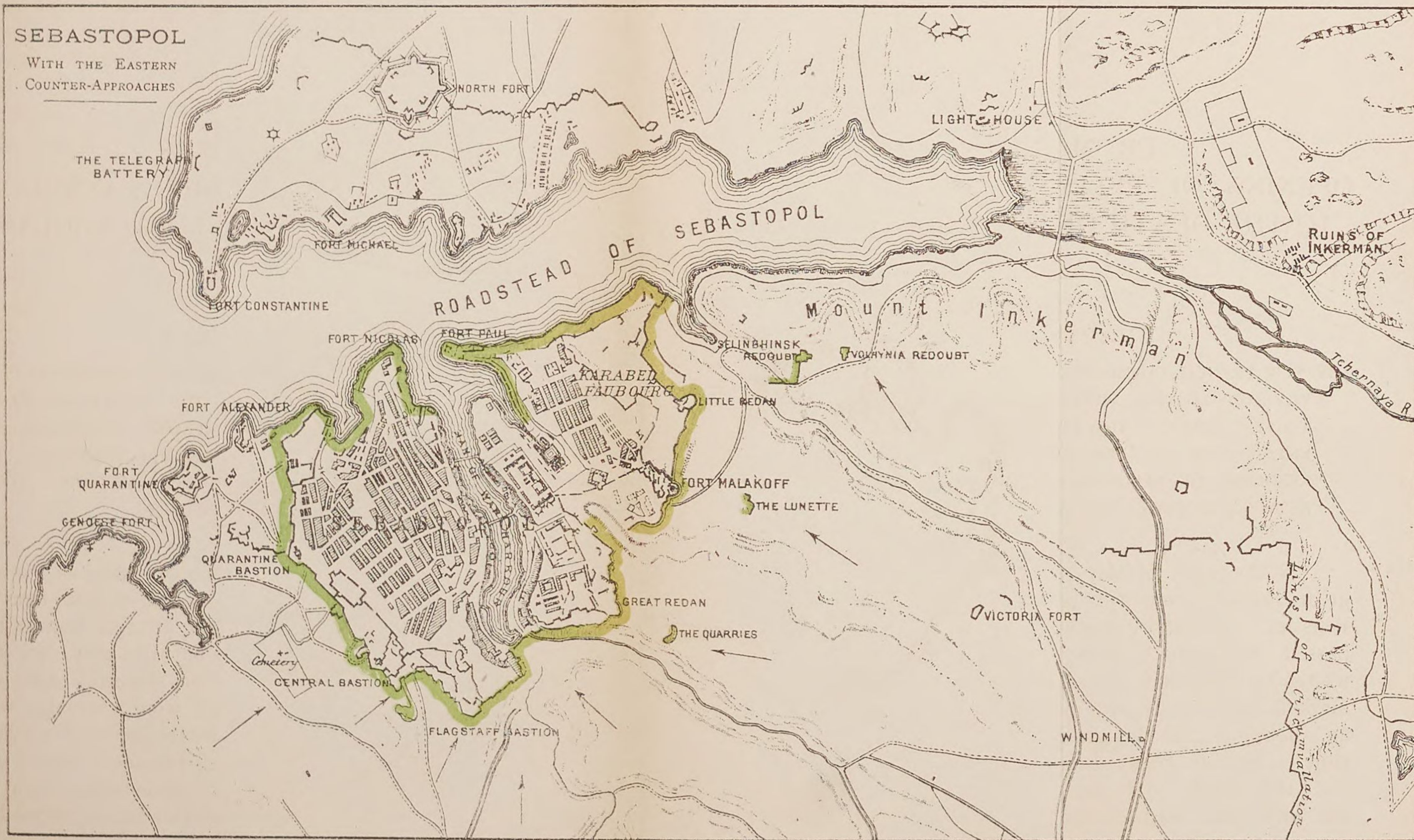
I.

CHAP.
I.
Pélissier.

ON the 19th of May, the command of the now
great French army was assumed in due form by
Pélissier. This short, thick-set, resolute Norman had
passed his sixtieth year; but the grey, the fast
whitening hair that capped his powerful head, and
marked the inroads of Time, wore a strange, wore
an alien look, as though utterly out of true fellow-
ship with the keen, fiery, vehement eyes, with
the still dark and heavy moustache, with all
the imperious features that glowed, or seemed to

SEBASTOPOL

WITH THE EASTERN
COUNTER-APPROACHES

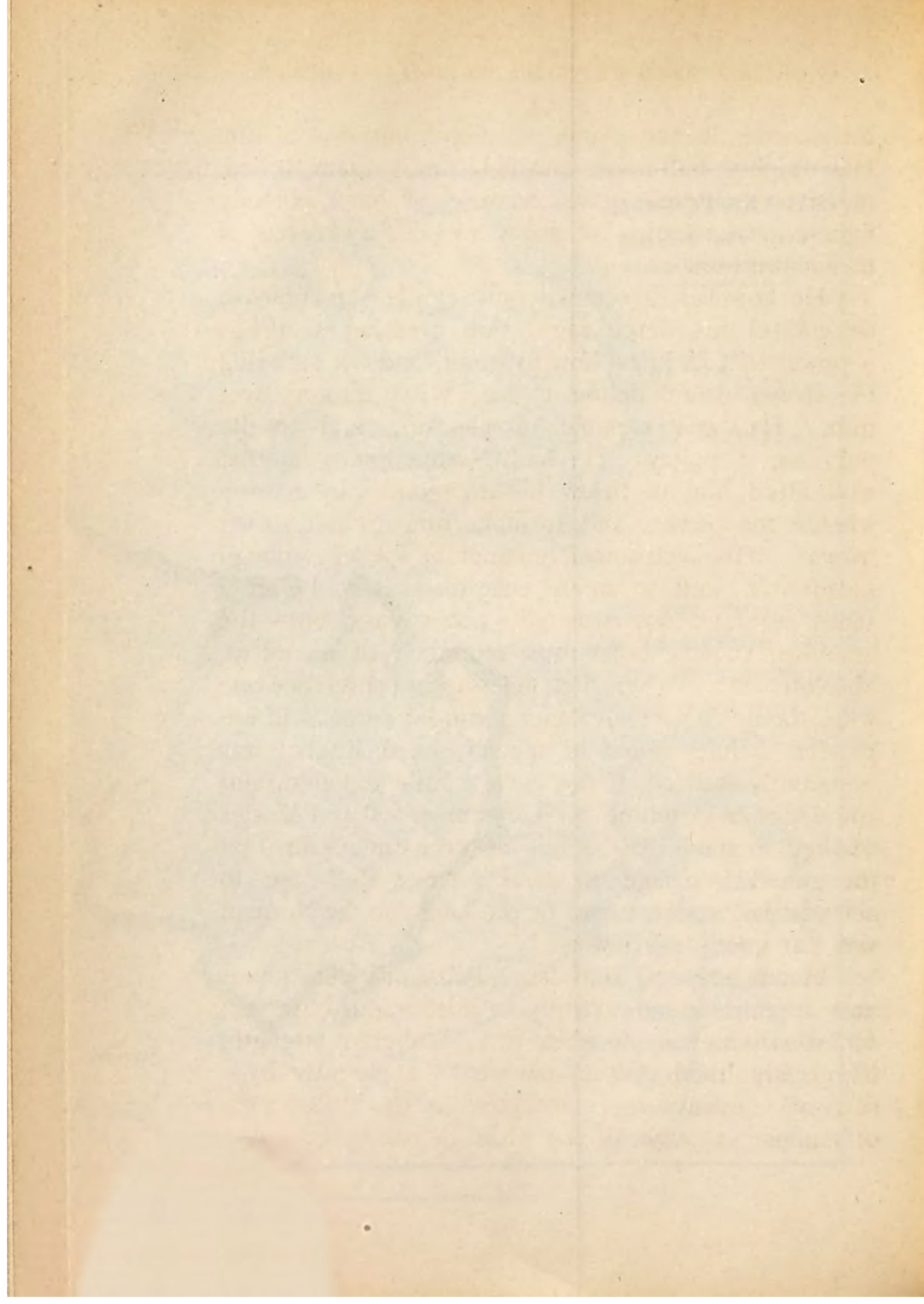


FURLS 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Scale

2

3 MILES



be glowing in the prime, or fierce mid-day of life. CHAP.
I.
His mighty bull-neck, strongly built upon broad, massive shoulders, gave promise of hard, bloody fights, gave warning of angry moods, and even of furious outbursts.

He however, it seems, could at pleasure unleash or control his fierce rage, thus treating wrath as a power that he knew how to wield, and not suffering the strong, useful demon to have a real mastery over him. He was capable of choosing and loyally pursuing a policy. He had Normanlike gifts that well fitted him to throw his antagonists in many a wrestle for power, and to make him a chief strong in war. His accustomed manner of speech, though so forcible, and so freely unbridled as to be in a sense dramatic, was after all—not a mask, but—the genuine, though boisterous utterance of a violent, absolute man. When first meeting in conference one who, though only then commanding a corps, still expended a huge force in speech, Lord Raglan was apparently startled, if not even a little repelled, and could not help telling his Government that Péliissier “talked a good deal”; but he even then said, that the general so eager to speak seemed also eager to act, and he happily found before long that the Norman was “as good as his word.”

In one respect, it is true, Péliissier's demeanour and speech tended strongly to mislead an observer; for, whether owing to whim or to exuberant strength, he greatly liked putting on what—apparently by a sort of convention—is accepted as the “roughness of camps,” though all the while in reality he was a

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I.

man of high cultivation, and, moreover, one versed in those duties—the duties, I mean, of “staff” service—which try the brain-power of officers engaged in the business of war. With the aid of such training as this, he had become fully capable of having or quickly acquiring the kind of statesmanship needed by one in the exalted position of commanding a splendid French army assembled in the enemy’s presence, and, for instance, understood, to begin with, how best to maintain honest concert with the English allies at his side.

Without speaking except by mere reference of his achievements in Algeria, or recurring by more than allusion to even the caves of the Dahra, or repeating what already we have seen of his victorious self-assertion maintained against what was then lawful authority, one can say of this stubborn commander that, whether pressing hostilities by a normal exertion of power, or straining his warlike prerogatives to a questioned extreme, or bringing new life to an army benumbed by want of sound leadership, he never ceased to disclose a strong and persistent will.* He was specially apt for those trials which have to be borne by a general engaged in an obstinate siege, since he knew how to make cruel sacrifices for the attainment of many an object small enough at first sight in itself, yet forming one in a series of steps leading up to the end.

* A passing mention of the “caves of the Dahra” appears *ante*, vol. III. pp. 8 and 9. The last allusion in the above sentence is to Péliissier’s wilful and victorious course of action, recounted *ante*, pp. 7 *et seq.*

He was by nature so manful, and—with justice—reposed in himself so unstinted a confidence, that—now in his sixty-first year—he could not apparently learn to become a respecter of persons set up in authority over him, and indeed had the air of regarding them with feelings scarce short of disdain. Untainted by any complicity in the plot of the 2d of December, and brought honestly up to the front by the strength of his warlike repute, he, when only commanding a corps, had been bold enough, as we saw, to begin protecting the army from Louis Napoleon's strategy;* and there well might be good hope that now, with his vastly extended power, he would firmly pursue a like course. Thus the man and the occasion were meeting. What France beyond all measure needed for the honour of her arms was a general (otherwise competent) who could and would push on the war without deferring unduly to her troublesome Emperor, and Pélissier fulfilled the condition.

II.

Upon acceding to the command, he thus addressed the War Minister:—"I have already seen Lord Raglan. Upon our general course of action we are in perfect accord. In common with the whole army I have entire faith in the future. I thank the Emperor for the confidence he reposes in me. I have measured the extent of my great duties; but in order that I may fulfil them with success for any length of time, you must ask the

Accord
between
Pélissier
and Lord
Raglan.

* See *ante*, his letter of the 5th of May, p. 79.

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I.

Full dis-
cretion de-
manded.

“Emperor to give me the latitude and freedom of
“action that are indispensable under the conditions
“presented by this present war, and especially neces-
“sary for preserving the close alliance between the
“two countries.”*

Prospect
of the two
generals
being able
to act in
full con-
cert.

Whilst Péliissier and Lord Raglan agreed on the questions then needing solution, there was also a well-founded hope that such differences of opinion as might afterwards spring up between them would be easily prevented from marring their power to act in due concert. To begin with, the new French commander, when acceding to power, seemed to hang on the words of his English colleague with an eagerness and a kind of devotion that he rarely if ever vouchsafed to any one other man; but, if swayed and won over (as indeed all men more or less were) by the personal ascendant of Lord Raglan, Péliissier had moreover convictions in harmony with the feelings he showed. He had the wisdom—State wisdom—enabling him to see the vital conditions on which the blessing of concord could best be attained and secured.

Lord Raglan, we know, on the other hand, was richly endowed with the faculty—the noble, the generous faculty—which enables one man to appreciate the rights, the fair claims, the natural feelings of others. From the first, he had well understood that, supposing the French army to be ably and honestly led, its chief (from the nature of things) might fairly claim more sway in council than one who only commanded a much less numerous force;

* Rousset, vol. II. p. 183.

and common-sense also showed that in conference between the two chiefs, he to whom any project might tender what men call "the labouring oar" would have a better right than his colleague to govern the joint resolve. Thus, for instance, Lord Raglan conceived that (along with the Ottoman army) French cavalry and other French troops might advantageously operate from Eupatoria against the enemy's rear; yet, because the proposal was one which sought to choose a new enterprise for some of Pélissier's troops, he, Pélissier, had a right to expect that any distaste for the measure which he might avow would be suffered, as of course, to prevail.

Both the chiefs, one may say, on the whole understood the true kind of relations that ought to be subsisting between them; and the time had now seemingly come when, unless our French allies should be hampered by the interference of Louis Napoleon, the armies of the two Western Powers might be acting as though they were one.

The spirit of concord thus ruling the French and the English headquarters carried with it the co-operation of the Sardinian contingent (placed, we saw, under Lord Raglan's guidance), and was destined besides to ensure the willing aid of the Ottoman forces in the Crimea; for by use of his mighty ascendant at Constantinople, Lord Stratford would soon be restoring the good-humour of Omar Pasha, and inclining him to act in smooth concert with the English allies of the Sultan.⁽¹⁾

Concord also to be expected with the Sardinian contingent;

and with Omar Pasha.

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I.

III.

Strength
of the
Allies;

Exclusive of non-combatants, the forces that might thus be expected to act together harmoniously in the south of the Crimea comprised (with the "Corps of Reserve" *) 100,000 French, 28,000 English, 15,000 Sardinians, and 45,000 Turks, making together 188,000 men.**

of the
Russians.

To—not merely collect and despatch from afar, but to—throw forward into the presence of a distant enemy, and firmly establish in front of him 188,000 good troops, whilst also supporting this host by fleets of great strength that held absolute command of the seas, and could cover the landing of troops on any chosen part of the coast—this was bringing to bear on Sebastopol a mighty exertion of power; and, on the other hand, it would seem that in the whole of the Crimea, exclusive of its Kertchine Peninsula, where 9000 troops were assembled, the enemy could now only reckon some 80,000 infantry, with 12,000 cavalry, and 214 pieces of field artillery.***

* Which had partly come up from Constantinople, and would be all on the Chersonese within a few days.

** Niel's calculation, given by Rousset, vol. II. p. 190, but with a correction adding 3000 to his estimate of the English combative force. The "Situation" of the French army (20th May 1855, Niel, App., p. 491), puts its gross numbers at 120,096, and shows a strength of 100,426 "disponibles." With their "indisponibles," the French in round and gross numbers had 120,000, the English 32,000, the Sardinians 17,000, and the Turks, under Omar Pasha, 55,000—making up altogether for the Allies a gross number of 224,000 men.

*** Todleben, vol. II. p. 258.

IV.

So, if only the Allies at this time had been free from the knot which still tied them to their siege of Sebastopol, they would seemingly have been able at once to reinvade the Crimea, to fasten upon it in strength from east to west, and with ease, or comparative ease, to reduce a fortress so weak on its northern front as to be there almost powerless against them, whilst lying besides at their mercy, because altogether cut off (by the supposed reinvansion) from its vital communications with Russia by either the land or the sea. But no such freedom belonged to the powerful yet fettered Allies. They had not yet expiated the fault of sitting down as besiegers before the south front of Sebastopol. Irresistible reasons, we know, forbade them all thought of enduring that their siege-works or their ports of supply should fall into the enemy's hands.* Yet, fitly to guard these possessions was a task, as we saw, ascertained to require 90,000 men, of whom all were perforce to be French, or French and English combined.** Hugely changed by this exigency, the problem no longer asked simply how best to conquer Sebastopol, but how best to attempt this concurrently with the furnishing of 90,000 men for another imperative task.

To answer the problem thus put, widely different solutions were offered.

With the bulk of the 98,000 men that would still be left after furnishing the guard of 90,000, and

* As shown *ante*, p. 77.

** See *ante*, p. 87.

[CHAP.
I.]

also leaving a garrison at Eupatoria, it was possible to undertake field operations which might force the enemy to relax his hold of Sebastopol; but every such project involved a more or less widened severance of the Allied forces.

It also was possible to avoid all such severances by simply pressing the siege, and this plan had the evident merit of compressing, as it were, into one the heavy task of defence and the less heavy task of conquest; so that under a project thus ordered, the whole mass of the 188,000 men (saving only a garrison for Eupatoria) might be kept together in an assembled state. To accept that alternative, however, was to make a distressing choice, for it involved the continuance of a siege to be pressed at cruel sacrifice of life against the now immensely strong front of an uninvested fortress, with all Russia at its back; and it sanctioned what, under one aspect, might pass for a huge waste of power, since, as long as the siege might endure, an enormous proportion of the 188,000 Allies, though gathered and ready for battle, would still be so circumstanced on the Chersonese and the neighbouring plain as to be able to do little or nothing towards bringing the strife to a close.

V.

Pélissier's
resolves.

Yet, with all its repulsiveness Pélissier preferred this last plan. He declined to undertake operations against the Russian field army, whether hazarded (as the Emperor urged) by effecting an advance from Aloushta, or attacking from ground further west, or again (as Lord Raglan had counselled) by directing

a movement from Eupatoria against the enemy's rear. He determined to go on waging war against the south side of Sebastopol by the simple, though bloody expedient of resolutely pressing the siege; and, finally, he meant or desired that, till after the end of this siege, the bulk of the four Allied armies should remain held together like one. It is true that (in concert with Lord Raglan) Pélissier determined to resume the Kertch expedition, and (for many good reasons) agreed that—employing for the purpose their cavalry, and other bodies of troops not engaged in the work of the siege—the Allies should take ground to their right in the valley of the Tchernaya; but the first of these operations was to be one of only brief duration, and the other one harmonised perfectly with that part of Pélissier's design which required—however anomalously—that, although so placed and confronted as to be unable to bring the enemy to the ordeal of a general action, the bulk of the vast Allied army should still for the time remain concentrated. Having laid it down peremptorily in his letter of the 5th of May that the field operations imagined against the enemy's rear must all be put off till the fortress should be reduced to a strict defensive, the new French commander now carried his principle further, and declared that the Allies must adventure on no such enterprises until after effecting the conquest of the whole south side of Sebastopol.

Though immediate resort to the field operations had been urged—was still urged—by the Emperor, Pélissier extended no mercy to any such projects, denounced them as “widely eccentric,” called them

CHAP.
I.

even in his scorn mere "adventures," and declared that, instead of the knowledge required for the invading the mountainous region of the Tchatir Dagħ with an enemy gathered behind it, there was hardly any knowledge at all, not even any trustworthy map.

Pélissier laid it down that the conquest of the south side of Sebastopol must be effected by grappling fast with its defences, and carrying them one after the other at all costs. Exactly as Lord Raglan had counselled, Pélissier, to begin with, insisted that all those counter-approaches in the Karabel Faubourg to which Canrobert had so long been submitting must be forcibly wrested from the enemy.

In this stern design against the "South Side" there was nothing that allured (like a battle) the rapt imaginations of men by opening a vision of glory attainable perhaps before sunset after going through only the ordeal of fights fought out in hot blood. Far from thinking that the path he had chosen was an easy, or a swift way to victory, Pélissier saw in it a course beset with evils and troubles, one involving cruel sacrifices, and after all, not even promising to compass without further efforts that long-pursued object of objects for which the Allies were in arms. It was only from that future campaign which would open, he took it for granted, after the fall of the "South Side" that Pélissier hoped to educe a not unworthy result. What he said for his plan of first pushing war to extremity against the "South Side" was simply this:—that its execution, however difficult, however costly of life, was still in his judgment "possible."*

* Rousset, vol. II. p. 184 *et seq.*

In a powerful letter addressed to General Bosquet, Pélissier declared his resolves, and did this, one may say, in the language of one who gives final judgment, as though it were matter of course that what he (in accord with Lord Raglan) had determined to do must and would be accordingly done. He did not, he could not say that his plans had been approved by his sovereign, nor again did he—even for form's sake—write any word tending to show that his resolve would be submitted to the Emperor. On the contrary, he wrote as a man whose word was perforce to be law. “I am firmly determined,” he said, “not to launch into the unknown, “to avoid adventures, and not to act without knowledge of what I am doing, or without the documents and the information necessary for the rational leadership of an army.” Speaking of the counter-approaches in the Faubourg still held by the Russians, he said in four words: “We must have them”; and then, after giving his reasons for this decision, he said: “All this may be painfully difficult, but it is possible, and to undertake it I am irrevocably determined. Such also is the opinion of the other Commanders-in-Chief.”*

Here then was the will of Pélissier declared to be fixed as Fate.

In words no less absolute—but these last, were they soundly prophetic of real achievements to come, or even indeed of the steadfastness of Pélissier's resolve?—the writer went on to announce that ulterior autumn campaign which was to be brought within

* Rousset, vol. II. p. 184 *et seq.*

CHAP.
I.

reach by first going through the siege ordeal. "The "South Side," he wrote, "of Sebastopol being once "taken, its resources carried off, and parked in our "fortified ports of Balaclava and Kamiesh, the arsenal, "the stocks destroyed, and thrown into the sea, the "remains of the Russian fleet sunk, we shall leave "on the Chersonese from 15,000 to 20,000 men, "and with 130,000 shall execute an autumn cam- "paign, untrammelled by other tasks, and, if it please "God, with some glory."

Prospect
of violent
strife be-
tween
Louis
Napoleon
and Pélis-
sier.

On the other hand, Louis Napoleon was violently, indignantly adverse to all idea of providing that the field operations should be preceded by the capture of the South Side; and it might seem that the authority of an absolute sovereign would perforce govern one of his generals; but the Emperor, as we know, always lived under that peculiar dread of offending his army which from time to time overrode what—only the moment before—had been his settled decisions, and was destined to involve him in ruin, along with not only his "Empire" but even that very army which he had feared to displease.⁽²⁾ He apparently knew or believed that, to depose Pélistier would be giving offence to his army on the Chersonese, and to his army in Algeria, but also—this above all—to his sensitive army at home; and accordingly we shall soon have to see him commanding, commanding, without being therefore for a moment obeyed, yet may, after all, not find him ready to vindicate his outraged authority by any ulterior steps. There are signs that Marshal Vaillant the Minister of War perceived, nay, recognised this

SCENE OF THE FIGHTS MAINTAINED BY PELISSIER
AFTER ACCEDING TO THE SUPREME COMMAND

THE COUNTER-APPROACHES TOWARDS THE CEMETERY
DOWN TO THE 22ND OF MAY.



as the actual state of what purported to be the governing power;* and perhaps some such light reached Pélissier; for, whilst steadily setting at nought the Emperor's orders, he had the air of obeying some esoteric authority which showed him his path of duty—which taught him that he—he alone—must bear the whole burthen of commanding the French in this war, and could not hope to excuse himself for any disastrous fault by alleging instructions received from his sovereign Louis Napoleon.

CHAP.
I.

Be all this as it may, the French Emperor at the time we have reached was about to be plying his distant and strong-willed general with censure, with indignant reproaches, with peremptory words of command; so that, whilst we are observing the conflict between the Allies and the Czar, we also shall have to be witnessing the interior strife going on between Napoleon the Third and Pélissier.

The Emperor, as we saw, had in Niel a delegate long since established at the French Headquarters whose obedience to his master was supported by his own real convictions, and a strenuous desire to press, to force their adoption on him who now ruled the French army; but it would seem that this aid on the whole did not bring a real strength to the Emperor; for the presence of a general undertaking to criticise and even oppose the measures of the Commander-in-Chief was beyond measure exasperating to the fiery Pélissier, and by acting thus on his temper may plainly have strengthened his will.

* See *post*, vol. XIV., chap. IX., Vaillant's use of the impersonal "on."

CHAPTER II.

NEW COUNTER-APPROACHES AND CONSEQUENT FIGHTS
ON THE WESTERN FLANK OF SEBASTPOL.

I.

CHAP.
II.The Cime-
tière
Ridge.

THE march of the siege where it threatened the western front of Sebastopol was all at once brought to a crisis which called on the new French commander to open his reign with some fights.

General Todleben had already established a chain of lodgments extending along the Cimetière Ridge; and the French on their part by this time had brought their approaches close up to the southernmost wall of the graveyard from which the Ridge took its name.

Now, because having relative height, and besides running parallel with the enceinte of Sebastopol at a distance of but 500 yards, the Cimetière Ridge thus held lightly by the enemy's lodgments, and thus approached by the French, was a position of great military value. If seized by the French, it would enable them to operate formidably against the Central Bastion; whilst again, if the fortune of war should leave it in Todleben's power, he might be expected to plant on it batteries destructive of the French approaches, and indeed, one may say, would be able to stop the advance of the siege as then pressed against western Sebastopol.

Measures
for se-
curing it
taken by

It might well have been therefore conjectured that, to secure the advantages offered, one or other of the opposing forces would very soon pass into

action; but what happened was that they both by ^{CHAP. II.} chance took their measures on the same night—the ^{the French and the Russians.} night of the 21st of May. It was then that our Allies pushed forward a trench by which they hoped in due time to be able to envelop the lodgments. It was then that the Russians began their boldly imagined enterprise.

II.

General Todleben in truth had projected a new ^{Todleben's project;} and great counter-approach which was to establish a fortified "Place d'armes" on all the great tract of ground which divided the enceinte of Sebastopol from the furthest or western slopes of the Cimetière Ridge. He at once, to begin with, would carry a trench along the front of most (not quite all) of the Cimetière lodgments, and besides, at its southern extremity, would connect this new counter-approach with the enceinte of Sebastopol by a gabionnaded way.

General Khrouleff too had his project, and de- ^{and Khrouleff's.} sired that some lodgments established near the head of the Quarantine Bay should be also connected by trench-work. The chiefs in Sebastopol saw that plans such as these were well calculated to provoke bloody fights, and might entail heavy sacrifices; but—although not unanimously—the proposals of both Todleben and Khrouleff were adopted by a Council ^{Both the projects adopted;} of War.

Accordingly, in the night of the 21st of May, ^{and executed in the} the two systems of projected trench-work were suc- ^{night of the} cessfully executed, and, before morning came, the ^{21st, result-} ing in;

CHAP.
II.

the Cime-
tière coun-
ter-ap-
proach;
and the
Bay-head
entrench-
ment.

“two chains of lodgments” had been already fore-
trenched by continuous lines of defence. The Cime-
tière trench alone could hold two battalions of troops;
and its southern extremity was now duly linked to
the fortress by a well-covered line of way.

So, at dawn on the 22d, our Allies saw the for-
tress expanding, nay already expanded, before them;
since, where yesterday there had only been strings
of the lodgments our people called “riflepits,” there
now ranged—however deficient in point of room and
solidity—continuous lines of defence which “an-
“nexed,” as it were, to Sebastopol a new, and great
tract of land.

III.

Pélissier;

his resolve
to attack
the
counter-
approaches
on the
night of
the 22d.

Now Pélissier—intent on the Faubourg—had no
mind to carry Sebastopol by breaking in through its
town front; and he well may have seen with regret
that this Russian challenge invited him to conflicts
on ground lying far from the principal path by which
he would march to his object; but alive to the value
of a powerful diversion, he, at this time, was plainly
resolved that, short of storming Sebastopol, he would
always carry on the “old siege”—the siege of Se-
bastopol town—with unrelenting vigour; and perhaps
one may safely infer that also he hearkened a little
to that fiery temper, that warlike spirit of his which
threatened him with the pains of self-scorn, if he
brookd any counter-approaches. At all events, he
determined that on the following night—it was only
at night that he could act so close under the gun
of Sebastopol—both of these two new counter-ap

proaches should be resolutely attacked. The Russians became aware of the onslaughts impending, and on each side the day of the 22d was passed in preparing for the strife, but especially in making beforehand such use of the artillery power as—in one direction or other—might help to govern the issue. For example, the French siege-guns raged against the Central Bastion, because the work was so placed that—not silenced perhaps by the darkness—its guns might interpose in the fight.

CHAP.
II.

Preparation on both sides for the night encounter.

IV.

It was with bodies of infantry some 6000 strong on each side that the French and the Russians respectively undertook to contend for the mastery of these two counter-approaches. General Paté, with under him General Beuret and General Motterouge, was to be in command of the French undertaking these night attacks.

Strength of the troops about to be engaged.

At about half-past nine in the evening, General Beuret led out a force of between three and four battalions against the counter-approach near the head of the Quarantine Bay, and wrested it without serious difficulty from the very few Russians who were there for the moment in charge; but the enemy soon brought up some troops fully equal in strength to the French, and then there ensued a hard fight, the ebb and the flow so alternating that for a time, not computed by any at less than two hours, the issue seemed hanging in doubt. The French however at length made good their ascendant, drove the enemy

Attack and capture of the Bay-head counter-approach.

CHAP.
II.

out of the work, and—reversing its parapet—soon made the entrenchment their own.

V.

The Cimetière counter-approach.

But the principal subject of strife was the counter-approach which had fastened along the Cimetière Ridge.

Auxiliary cannonade.

To support his design of attacking this new Work with infantry, Péliissier took care to bombard every part of the Russian enceinte which stood near enough to be sharing in the expected fights. His artillery raged so destructively against the batteries of the Central Bastion and the adjacent works that they were, some of them, silenced, and all, it seems, brought to a nearly helpless condition; but Todleben in person came up to the Bastion, caused the dead and the wounded gunners to be replaced by fresh men, caused the choked embrasures to be cleared, and in short restored to the batteries some at least of their fighting capacity.

The Central Bastion under fire of the French siege-guns.

Attack and first capture of the Cimetière counter-approach;

At half-past nine o'clock in the evening, battalions commanded by Motterouge advanced from their sap on the flank of Todleben's new counter-approach; and, the Work being then only occupied by about 70 men, was easily seized by the French, who thereupon established themselves in front of the lodgments, thus covering those of their working parties, which had begun to transform the entrenchment; but "formidable masses of Russians" (it is Péliissier who speaks) came up from the ravine be-

its recapture.

low, and, fighting with an extraordinary obstinacy, proved able to recapture the Work. CHAP.
II.

Then, however, advancing once more with numbers increased, and with resolute purpose, the French threw their strength on the flank of the counter-approach, swept the enemy out of its precincts from end to end, and drove him down the acclivity of the Zarogodnaia Ravine. The Russian losses were heavy, and included General Adlerberg, who was killed. Third capture of the Cimetière counter-approach;

Then Colonel Gardner (an officer of the Russian Engineers*) disclosed an inborn capacity for swaying an infantry fight. Despatched with a fresh battalion, he rallied the fugitives scattered in the Zarogodnaia Ravine, restored them to order, inspired them with fresh warlike ardour, and intrepidly led the whole body, then gladly accepting his guidance to another attack on the Cimetière counter-approach, and delivered this return onslaught with so great a vigour that the French once again were driven out of the Work, and even pursued in their flight along the trench they had opened on the night of the 21st. fourth capture of the Work;

Without waiting for the need that might be occasioned by the next alternation of fortune, General Khrouleff reinforced his battalions whilst still victorious with a fresh body of troops not less than 600 strong.

Not shaken, however, in purpose, the French brought up their reserves—troops including the Vol- fifth attack on the Work;

* I felt prone to infer from his name that this brilliant officer must be of Scotch or English extraction; but I learn that he was of Teuton descent, and born in one of the Baltic provinces. He, however, was thoroughly Russian.

CHAP.
II.

tigeurs of the Guard—and executed a determined attack on the long-disputed counter-approach. The onslaught, however, was met with strenuous resistance, with strenuous counter-attacks; and the strife that resulted was maintained on each side with rare obstinacy. “The bayonet *mêlées*,” says Péliissier, “were terrible. Two other battalions of Voltigeurs “of the Guard, the 9th Chasseurs à pied, and the “8th of the Line, were called to the ground.”

The strain put on the French raised a need for, as sea-captains word it, “All hands!” Till now, held in readiness to “transform” the entrenchment when captured, the men of their “working-parties” were swift to lay down their tools, to stand to their arms, and thenceforth—not sparing their labour—to labour only as combatants. To the Russians new fire was imparted by the example of some freshly acceding troops which—panting to show their true quality after having been under a cloud—fought on and on and on with a zeal and a courage that won the hearts of their comrades.

The fierce, bloody, hand-to-hand strife was from time to time interrupted when—receding perhaps a few feet—the masses in conflict sometimes left open spaces between them great enough for exchanges of fire; and then of course for a while their cartridges blazed through the darkness, but again and again the closer fighting recurred, and again and again was maintained by French and Russians alike with a valour that seemed nearly equal. Preceded as we have been by four conflicts, and no less a number of captures alternately changing the owner-

ship of the hotly contested prize, this the fifth of the fights for the counter-approach was, it seems, the most stubborn of all, and already the night was far gone, when the French at last made good their mastery, overthrew all the Russians before them, and once more recaptured the Work.⁽¹⁾

CHAP.
II.

and its re-
capture by
the French.

VI.

When this combat had ended, the night was already far spent, and the French soon perceived that they had not time left for the process—impossible without cover from darkness—of securing themselves in their prize against the guns of the fortress. Therefore, after first doing their best to ruin or damage its trench-work, they withdrew from the counter-approach thus long and fiercely contested, but not without a firm purpose on the part of their chiefs to attack it again the next night.

Course
afterwards
taken by
the French.

VII.

On the 23d, the Russians learnt from deserters that the Allies had received great reinforcements, and their watch-tower (the Volokoff Battery) began to make signals. These signals announced that bodies of troops had been seen landing at Kamiesh, but they also declared that on the previous evening and afterwards in the early morning that followed, other bodies—apparently from ten to fifteen thousand—had been seen to be there embarking.

Signals
from the
Volokoff
tower;

This last announcement gave rise to various conjectures; and, amongst them, to one which suggested

Their effect
on Prince
Gortcha-

CHAP.
II.koff's
determina-
tion :his deci-
sion.Night of
the 23d ;
the Cime-
tière
counter-
approach
carried by
the
French ;and trans-
formed

that the Allies might intend to effect a landing on some part of the coast, with a mind to operate thence against the Russian field army. Prince Gortchakoff, on this ground, considering that he ought to concentrate troops on the "Old City Heights," and in the neighbourhood of the Mackenzie Farm, reckoned also that, if doing so, he would not be able to replace any further heavy losses which the garrison might sustain by drawing troops from his field army. He therefore resolved to abandon this difficult struggle—already so costly to life—for the Cimetière counter-approach.* To make sure before yielding, however, that the French remained firm in their purpose, he left two battalions in the Work with orders to fall back when gravely attacked, and he directed that the troops thus withdrawing should not be supported by others.**

On the night of the 23d, the French renewed their attack on the Cimetière counter-approach; and, though meeting, it seems, more resistance than Prince Gortchakoff had consented to sanction, they very soon made good their conquest. Then reversing the parapet, and making the other fit changes, they so well transformed the work that what had been a counter-approach stretching out like a shield to cover the heart of Sebastopol was, before morning dawned, a new parallel confronting the Fortress, and established moreover on heights so near and command-

* This decision of course gives support to those of the Allies, including the French Emperor and Niel, who desired a resort to field operations.

** These directions were made an "order of the day."

ing that siege-guns there planted might shatter some all-precious links in the enemy's chain of defence.

CHAP.
II.

The conquest was thus complete, but it cost the French dear. Altogether, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, they lost 2303,* and the Russians 3061.**

into a
siege-
work.
Losses on
each side.

VIII.

The losses thus incurred by the French made a heavy addition to those they before had sustained when—with similar objects—assailing the obstinate Soudal Counter-guard; and, it having been long since determined that the real attack on Sebastopol should be made through the Faubourg, an adverse critic might say that Pélissier was making his sacrifices in the wrong part of the field. Pélissier, however, was one who accepted the teachings of science, and authoritative science assured him that, whatever might be his design for ultimately attacking the fortress, he perforce must uphold the ascendant of a firm, unrelenting besieger, and uphold it along his whole front by all the fighting required for securing the end thus enjoined. Still, observers with minds not high-strung, and not sufficiently braced by the cogent precepts of Vauban might well feel pain in reflecting that all these distressing sacrifices offered up on the west of the Chersonese could be only indirectly conducive to what had become the real object—the object of reducing Sebastopol by first reducing the Malakoff.⁽²⁾

Ground on
which the
sacrifices
made by
Pélissier
were justi-
fied.

* Niel, pp. 255, 357.

** Todleben, vol. II. pp. 246, 249.

CHAPTER III.

PÉLISSIER FIRMLY PURSUING HIS CHOSEN PLANS OF
ATTACK IN DEFIANCE OF LOUIS NAPOLEON.CHAP.
III.

Impending
strife be-
tween
Louis
Napoleon
and Pélis-
sier.

The Em-
peror.

Pélissier.

Marshal
Vaillant.

THE fighting thus brought by the French to a victorious issue was induced, as we saw, by the stress of the enemy's challenge, and could not have well been arrested by any orders from Paris; but Pélissier had already made choice—made choice, as he stated, “irrevocably” of a well-defined plan of attack; and this, it was only too certain, his sovereign would forbid, or obstruct.

There followed sharp strife. On the one side, contended an Emperor—an Emperor armed by new laws with authority to direct from afar the commander-in-chief of his army, and not only served by the magic of the electric wires, but also by a strong, zealous envoy established at the seat of war. On the other side, he who contended was only a general; but the general was Pélissier; and already we know the strength of his fiery, resolute nature.

Marshal Vaillant, the chief of the War Department, placed “absolute” confidence in Pélissier; but not being the Minister of a constitutional State, he could hardly exert his official power in any strong, peremptory way. He however did good, immense good. Marshal Vaillant had not passed in the world as a gentle, complaisant man; but he acted in this conjuncture with propriety and excellent sense, striving always to moderate, and turn away the wrath

of the disputants, and entreating the angry general to soften his letters in form, yet not wishing, it would seem, that in substance Pélissier should yield to the Emperor.

So early as the day when Pélissier announced his accession to the command at the English Headquarters, he freely declared himself minded to renew the attack upon Kertch; and this design was matured at a conference held the next day. General Niel being one of those present, stated fully the grounds upon which he thought fit to oppose the measure; but his counsel produced no effect.*

Pélissier's determination to renew the attack upon Kertch. General Niel at the Conference;

Strong, however, in his natural self-confidence, and besides in his conviction—his really well-founded conviction—that in this he represented the Emperor, Niel addressed to the French commander a deliberate remonstrance in writing not only against Pélissier's refusal to sanction any field operations for the purpose of investing Sebastopol, but also against his resolve to concur with Lord Raglan in sending a new expedition to Kertch; but Pélissier growing savage upon this provocation made haste to accentuate the language in which he conveyed his resolve, and by telegraph at once said what follows to the Minister of War: "The march of two *corps d'armée*, one from "Aloushta on Simferopol, the other from Baidar on "Baktchi Seräi, is big with difficulties and risks. It "is the Kabyle country over again, and unknown. "The direct investment effected by carrying the "Mackenzie Heights would cost as dear as the assault "of Sebastopol, and the result would be very un-

his written protest.

21st May. Pélissier to Minister of War.

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, May 22, 1855.

CHAP.
III.

“certain. I have come to an understanding with
 “Lord Raglan for the carrying of the counter-ap-
 “proaches, for the occupation of the ground on our
 “right home down to the Tchernaya, and finally for
 “an operation against Kertch. Our allies attach
 “great importance to the measure, and I acknowledge
 “that the operation is a good one. All is advancing:
 “the movements are already in progress.” *

22d May.
 Same to
 same.

The next day, Péliissier addressed to Marshal
 Vaillant a letter in which he requested that “suf-
 ficient latitude” should be granted to him; but—
 read with the context—those words carried mockery
 rather than prayer; for an earlier part of the letter
 made it plain that the wilful general had already
 seized and used the broad freedom for which he
 professed to be asking. He already had written thus:
 “Lord Raglan has asked me to renew the operation
 “against Kertch, to which the English army and
 “Government and the two fleets attach so high a
 “value. It has seemed to me that it would be good
 “policy in reference to the future of our operations
 “concerted with the English to make a beginning of
 “my relations with them by an act which would heal
 “the wound they received from the recall of the
 “former expedition, would end the very grave trouble
 “which it brought upon the relations between the
 “French and the English, and restore that harmony
 “which is in one word the great necessity of the time.
 “The expedition has therefore been determined upon,
 “and the troops embark to-day.” **

* Telegram of the 21st May.—Rousset, vol. II. p. 191.

** Ibid.

Accentuated by such an announcement this language might well be astounding to the Emperor Louis Napoleon, since he not only found himself extruded from the command of his army in the Crimea, but even, as we saw, overruled in a matter concerning high policy, and the maintenance of friendship with England. He by telegraph said to Pélissier on the following day: "I have confidence in you, and I do not pretend to command the army from hence.*" "Still, I must tell you my opinion, and you must respect it. It is absolutely necessary to make a great effort and beat the Russian army in order to invest the place. To be looking for space and for grass does not now suffice.** If you scatter your forces instead of drawing them together, you will do nothing decisive, and besides, will lose precious time. The Allies have in the Crimea 180,000 men. With such a force anything can be done; but it is necessary to manœuvre, and not take the bull by the horns. To manœuvre, is to threaten the weak sides of the enemy. It has seemed to me that the weak side of the Russians is their left wing. If you send 14,000 men to Kertch, you weaken yourself uselessly. It is confessing that there is nothing serious to be attempted; for one does not willingly weaken one's self on the eve of a battle. Weigh all that carefully."***

Louis
Napoleon
to Pélis-
sier,

* This disclaimer was retracted by even the two next sentences, and again by the Emperor's two next messages to Pélissier.

** This taunt was in allusion to Pélissier's plan of taking ground to the Tchernaya.

*** Rousset, vol. II. pp. 192, 193.

CHAP.
III.Louis
Napoleon
again to
Pélissier.

The next day, Louis Napoleon wrote thus to Pélissier:—"The course to take is easily indicated: "1st, to defeat the Russian army in order to invest "the place; 2d, the place being invested, to take "Sebastopol; 3d, the place being taken, to evacuate "the Crimea, and blow up the fortifications, or leave "there only the Turks. The means of arriving at "this result are of course more especially within your "province, and I leave you free in your choice of "the means; but, as for the general course of action, "you must follow the precise orders that I give you. "They moreover are orders similar to those which "Lord Raglan has received. . . . I explain "to you, General, what are my views and my inten- "tions. I reckon on your experience, your talents, "and your patriotism to carry them into effect, and "force Lord Raglan to help you."*

Pélissier
to the
Minister
of War.

The Emperor had hardly despatched this letter when he found laid before him this telegram of the previous day from Pélissier to the Minister of War: "A strategic discussion by telegraph with all the "reasons for and against such or such a plan seems "to me impossible. The detailed reports that I send "you by every mail will convince his Majesty, I hope, "that if I have not applied his plan, this is because "it does not seem to me possible to do so immedi- "ately without danger."

Louis
Napoleon
to Pélis-
sier.

Thereupon the enraged Emperor telegraphed to Pélissier: "It is no question of discussion between "us, but of orders to give, or to receive. I did not "say to you, 'Execute my plan;' I said, 'Your plan

* Rousset, vol. II. pp. 211, 212.

“does not seem to me adequate.’ It is an absolute
 “necessity to invest the place without loss of time.
 “Tell me what means you will employ to attain the
 “object.”*

CHAP.
III.

Though Pélissier was himself, as we have seen, a fiercely choleric man, he yet seemingly knew how to meet the angry raging of others with a manful composure. In answer to the Emperor’s missive, but addressing himself, as usual, to the Minister of War, Pélissier fenced lightly enough with the imperial notions by reverting to the arguments he had used in his famous letter to Canrobert,** and added, “My
 “first duty was to restore that understanding [with
 “the English] which had been greatly compromised.
 “I have completely restored it. I can’t specify future
 “operations without exposing myself to the risk of
 “having my words falsified by the course of events.
 “Be trustful. Let his Majesty also deign to be the
 “same.”***

Pélissier
to the
Minister
of War.

When the Emperor thus found himself baffled in all his persistent attempts to direct a campaign from the Tuileries, it was natural of course that his emissary should fall from the height he had reached in the palmy days of the “Mission.” General Niel soon began to write piteously of the treatment he was receiving from the fiery commander-in-chief: “At a
 “meeting which took place yesterday he, Pélissier,
 “ordered me to be silent with a harshness not to be
 “characterised, because I spoke of the dangers at-

Position
and lamen-
tations of
General
Niel.

* Rousset, vol. II. p. 212.

** See *ante*, p. 79.

*** Rousset, vol. II. p. 213.

CHAP.
III.

“tendant upon vigorous actions attempted by great
 “masses at great distances. We were in presence
 “of English officers. I saw his anger, and deter-
 “mined at all costs to avoid a scene which would
 “have made my relations with him impossible. This
 “morning at a similar meeting General Beuret of the
 “Artillery, for making a perfectly innocent observa-
 “tion was so grossly ill-treated that his eyes filled
 “with tears, and he asked me whether he could re-
 “main with the army. . . . Here is now a man
 “who is going to become a raging madman.* . . .
 “The English have drawn him, Pélissier, to them,
 “and he has adopted their system of war—a system,
 “in my opinion, the most imprudent of all,—which
 “consists in pushing straight forward from the old
 “positions.”

After expressing the grief inflicted upon him by the change of plan, and showing that Pélissier was angry with him for writing letters to the Emperor, General Niel continued:—

“The army in the Crimea is excellent, and asks
 “but to fight. What is wanting to the army is a
 “chief to lead it. God grant that the army may
 “have one!”**

Niel's
 entire loss
 of power.

Under the vigorous sway of Pélissier, Niel retained not so much as a shred of the baneful power he had wielded in General Canrobert's time.

Niel had aided his sovereign in doing grievous harm to the French and their allies by paralysing their action against Sebastopol; but it must not be imagined that he was only a servile man striving for

* “Fou furieux.”

** Rousset, vol. II. pp. 209, 210.

mere obedience' sake to execute the will of his sovereign. On the contrary, his ceaseless insistence on the policy of completely investing Sebastopol by means of field operations was the natural and direct result of his own strongly rooted opinion.

To thoughtful men rendered anxious (as was, we know, Marshal Vaillant) by the antagonism of opinion established between the Emperor and Pélissier, any hope that this gulf-wide difference might be treated as a "misunderstanding" removable by patience and words could hardly have failed to prove welcome; but no such outlet lay open. Each, Emperor and General alike, asserted his strongly fixed will with so great a precision that the antagonism between the two men became, and remained, clear as day. Upon all the five questions that had to be solved, their two judgments,—I might say, their "decisions" (for each of them thought to be master),—were, not simply differing, but opposite. Pélissier determined—determined, as he said, "irrevocably"—that by stress of close siege operations he would carry the south of Sebastopol. He determined that, till after achieving his purpose against the "South side" of Sebastopol, he would order no field operations with a view of investing the place.⁽¹⁾ He determined that, without more delay than was needed for due preparation, he would attack and reconquer every one of the counter-approaches to which Canrobert had submitted. He determined that, with troops not required for the toils of the siege, he would occupy ground extending to the left bank of the Tchernaya. He determined

Antagonism between Louis Napoleon and Pélissier.

Pélissier's five resolves;

CHAP.
III.

Louis
Napoleon
opposed to
each of
them.

that, along with the English, he would renew the Expedition to Kertch. To every one of these measures the Emperor opposed his authority. One or other—the Emperor or the General—would have to give way, or else to be forcibly vanquished.

But which?

Pélissier's
resistance.

There are signs, though not proofs, that the need of arresting wild, hazardous efforts to direct a campaign from the Tuileries was felt to be painfully cogent by more than one man in authority; but, whether he acted in circumstances implying something like concert, or was singly obeying the call of a duty he owed to his country, or whether again he was ruled by the sheer force of judgment, or in part by temper or temperament, Pélissier at all events guarded France, and the honour of her army, from the meddling hand of a sovereign who, not being either a trained, or by natural gifts a born soldier or even a soldier at all, and not acting under the guidance of any responsible Ministers, still supposed himself fitted—by wisdom—to conduct from Paris a war carried on under novel conditions against the empire of Russia; and how, when driven to words, Pélissier used them as means which helped towards averting the mischief we have partly been able to see; but it was not by words alone that he kept the perturber at bay. He often used “golden” silence, and from time to time answered with deeds more convincing than all worded arguments.

His
method.

Occupation
by the
Allies of
fresh

With before him his Emperor's message decrying any resolve to take ground towards the Tchernaya, Pélissier promptly made bold to set the measure on

foot; and—concurrently with troops of all arms supplied by the other allies—he carried it into effect. It was on the 25th of May, at the close of a march begun before midnight, that, supported by not only English and Ottoman forces but also by the newly acceding Sardinians (whose appearance and bearing seemed excellent), two French divisions under Canrobert (the late commander-in-chief) moved down to the Tractir Bridge, and—after sweeping the enemy from the opposite bank of the Tchernaya—took up a position which, starting from the base of the steep at the right rear of the Inkerman battle-field, extended thence down to the river.

CHAP.
III.

ground to-
wards the
Tchernaya.

And again, when Pélissier saw that imperious words from the Tuileries were condemning the movement to Kertch, he none the less ordered or suffered the denounced expedition to sail, and hold on in its prosperous course.

On all the five warlike resolves he had made in the teeth of his Emperor, this stronger, more hot-headed man was destined to have his way.

Pélissier
having his
way.

Pélissier had a great, mighty will; but he seemingly gathered new strength, as strong-willed men oftentimes do, from what some would call “the dark passions”—from anger, from hatred, from scorn.

In writing to the Minister of War, Pélissier did not even deny himself the luxury of a little sharp satire directed against the Emperor. He contrasted the strategical dreamer in Paris, his “general maps” and his “geometric lines,” with the real commander engaged at close quarters against the real enemy and on the real ground. Whilst persevering in absolute,

CHAP.
III.

explicit resistance to the Emperor upon every question then raised, he coolly said that he would separate himself from the Emperor's views as little as possible, and besides, wrote almost as one who belonged to a constitutional State, saying that he hoped to justify the confidence reposed in him by—not the Emperor but—the Minister to whom he was writing.* Towards the end of one letter he wrote:—"I feel my shoulders strong enough for the burthen with which I am laden, but I shall carry it all the better if feeling that I have a certain freedom of action."

Allusion
to the
Directory
of 1796-97
and the
great
Buona-
parte.

By the stroke of Fate thus oddly busied with its last impish freak of inversion, a metamorphosed "Napoleon" was all at once left in the plight of that unhonoured Directory of 1796 and the following year, which thought it could dictate in war, or dictate at the least in State policy to the great Buonaparte, and was answered from over the Alps with resistance, with scorn, and with victory.⁽²⁾

CHAPTER IV.

THE RENEWED EXPEDITION TO KERTCH, WITH ITS SEQUEL
IN THE SEA OF AZOF, AND ON THE CIRCASSIAN COAST.

I.

CHAP.
IV.

IN even its stage of preparatives, the second armada despatched to open the Cimmerian Bosphorus, had already by fortunate accident achieved a great good, and apparently saved many lives. That which—signalled from the Volokoff Watch-tower on

* Rousset, vol. II. p. 218.

the 23d of May—put a stress on the enemy's counsels, and brought him, however reluctant, to accept defeat from the French, was a movement of vessels and troops going on in the port of Kamiesh for some purpose he could not divine. The activity he then thought mysterious was the stir of embarkation importing a renewed expedition to Kertch.

CHAP.
IV.

Much of what I premised when recounting the abortive Expedition begun on the 3d of May must be now borne in mind, or recalled by those who would have clear ideas of the subsequent invasion pushed home through the Kertchine Peninsula* to the shores of the Sea of Azof.**

Relevance
of some
previous
statements
to the sub-
ject of this
second Ex-
pedition.

In the interval between the two expeditions, the Russians had mounted some guns on the Cheska Spit, and had also continued their efforts to block the way through the Straits by sinking vessels charged with explosives; whilst also it is true on the other hand that (designing them for garrison purposes) the Allies brought with them, this time, a body of 5000 Ottoman troops, and varied by other less changes the original structure of their armada as prepared for the first expedition; but in other respects, speaking generally, the conditions attending this second advance, and any attempt to oppose it resembled those we saw operating nearly three weeks before, when—not having been yet overtaken by Canrobert's words of recall—the armada had sighted Cape Takli, and was smoothly approaching the coast.

* See *ante* Map III. p. 52.

** See especially *ante*, pp. 52-57.

CHAP.
IV.

The renewed expedition embarked in the evening of the 22d and the morning of the 23d of May. The attendant fleets English and French were commanded, the one, by Admiral Lyons, the other, by Admiral Bruat.

Composition of the armada.

Commanded by Sir George Brown, the land forces of the Allies were, this time, 7000 French under the immediate command of General d'Autemarre, 3000 English, and 5000 Turks under Redchid Pasha (in all 15,000), having with them five batteries, a few Engineers, and (for escort duty) a body of some fifty English hussars.

Its course.

Soon after daylight on the 24th of May, the armada gained its place of rendezvous off Cape Takli, and then at once moved on at speed towards the bay of Kamish Boroune, in which the troops were to land.

The strength of Baron Wrangel.

The strength of Baron Wrangel was still, as before, a little short of 9000, and included nearly 3000 cavalry.

The predicament in which he was placed.

Judging roughly of the numbers against him, Baron Wrangel considered himself placed in exactly the same predicament that had threatened him on the approach of the First Expedition.

His resolve.

As before, so also, this time, and still for the same cogent reason, he judged that he could not defend that precious chain of coast batteries which had given him his control of the Straits. He succumbed to the power (of which the world will learn much in times yet to come)—the power an armada

The power to which he succumbed.

can wield when not only carrying on board a force designed for land-service, but enabled to move—to move swiftly—whether this way or that, at the will of the chief, who thus, so to speak, can “manœuvre” against an army on shore with troops not yet quitting their ships. The power would be one of great cogency, under many conditions, but especially so if it happen that the defender of the coast has in charge two highly valued possessions divided the one from the other by several miles of ground.

Of those two tracts of ground far disjoined from each other which Baron Wrangel, if able, would have anxiously sought to defend, the one towards the east comprised the Coast batteries fraught with the absolute control of the Straits, and its retention he might well deem momentous, since only to that very end was he there with horse, foot, and artillery; but then he could not forget that the command of free access to the Isthmus and the roadway along its whole course was something more than “momentous” to him and his forces—was in truth rather what men call “vital,” because involving his all-precious communications with the main army under Prince Gortchakoff to which he belonged, and the Government of the country he served.

In common land-warfare, a distance of some seventy miles between two tracts of ground that have to be guarded may not be a circumstance hampering to plans for defending them both; but it grievously baffled resistance to squadrons with troops on board, and propelled by steam-power at a rate vastly greater than any that battalions of Foot can attain by march-

CHAP.
IV.

ing and countermarching along the weary miles of a road. To mistake a feint for the opening of a real attack might be to incur a disaster; yet how to distinguish between the two operations by merely watching ships out at sea? The allies made no feint; but by simply advancing straight forward to what, as we know, was their object, they did not prevent Baron Wrangel from thinking that the movement was or might be a feint; and, although resting simply on inference, his belief was no whit less distracting than a feint really made. The sight of an armada approaching the landing-place of Kamish Boroune did not even for an instant make Wrangel believe himself safe against a descent on the shore some seventy miles to the westward, because he well knew that a signal run up in a minute by one of the flag-ships might, like magic, arrest and reverse the whole eastward movement, and swiftly send back the armada to waters off the known landing-ground in the neighbourhood of the town, Theodosia, where its presence would all at once challenge his command of the Isthmus, and with it, the very existence of all the force under his orders.

Baron
Wrangel's
retreat.

It was under these painful conditions—conditions deserving the study of any maritime Power which has coasts at home to defend, or coasts abroad to attack—that Baron Wrangel abandoned his defence of the Coast batteries, determined to have them destroyed, and drew off to Sultanoffka at first, but afterwards towards the great Road—the Imperial Road through the Isthmus which connected him with the main Russian army.

CHAP.
IV.Unopposed
landing of
the troops.

Accordingly it was without opposition, though not of course without guarding against any chance of attack, that (under the cover of guns disposed on board the steam frigates and other less vessels) the Allied troops with horses and batteries and all their train of appurtenances began to fill the boats of the squadrons, and move towards the landing-place chosen in the bay of Kamish Boroune. Under the immediate direction of Admiral Houston Stewart (whose arrangements were held to be perfect) the process continued all day and throughout the following night without being delayed or obstructed by any kind of mishap. The French and the English infantry were the first to land, and Brown placed them in position, the French on the right, the English on their left, and provided that, disembarked, his Turks should take the ground he assigned them in support to the other allies. Soon afterwards, General d'Autemarre at the request of Sir George moved forward towards the Coast batteries established near the Cape of St. Paul.

Sir George
Brown's
measures
on shore.

Exactly as he had intended to do when the first expedition was threatening, Baron Wrangel soon began to destroy his Coast batteries by blowing up their magazines and spiking their guns. Beginning with those near Cape Paul, the Baron went on—at intervals—with this work of destruction, and by his orders sooner or later, though not with precipitate haste, and not in every case with such promptitude as to prevent the discharge of some shots, his Coast batteries were, all of them, ruined.

Baron
Wrangel's
destruction
of his Coast
batteries.

Followed by the gunners of the Paul batteries

Retreat of
Russian
troops.

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IV.

then already destroyed, that part of Baron Wrangel's land-force which he called "the Detachment of "Kertch" retreated in a westward direction by the great Theodosia Road. These, however, with most of his troops in the east of the Kertchine Peninsula were soon gathered round Sultanoffka (where headquarters at first were established), but his ultimate current of retreat was towards the all-precious Isthmus. The small garrison of Yeni Kalé was left to escape by sea.

Destruc-
tion of food
by Baron
Wrangel.

Whilst making free havoc of his master's batteries, the Baron likewise sought to destroy all such other Government property as he could not remove, and besides, every sort of possession thought likely to serve an invader. He destroyed more than four million pounds of corn and half a million pounds of flour.*

With the singular keenness these people seemed almost always to show when destroying the possessions of their own fellow-subjects, some Cossacks alertly spread out over part of the steppe, and hastened to burn down the farmsteads.

The
squadron
of Kertch.

With respect to the Russian war squadron assembled in the bay of Kertch, Baron Wrangel, it seems, did not order Rear-Admiral Wulff, who commanded it, to undertake any defence of either the town or the Straits, nor even to oppose any craft whether English or French trying singly to push through the Straits; but he desired that, before mak-

* More exactly, 4,166,000 lb. of corn and 508,000 lb of flour. The figures are taken from entries made in the Russian Government books.

ing off, the vessels composing this squadron should take on board Government property; and from this cause it happened that they were not all moved out from the bay at an earlier time.

CHAP.
IV.

One of these small vessels of war, that is, the steam-schooner Argonaut, had at length got her cargo on board, and was already making off for Yeni Kalé, when Lieutenant M'Gillop (commanding a gunboat, the Snake, not employed in the landing of troops) conceived the idea of trying to stop her flight. Dashing past some guns not yet destroyed, he first opened fire on the fugitive Argonaut, and then also on the war-steamer Goëts, which the Russian Admiral Wulff had sent out to aid her, and then also on a third war-steamer, the Berdiansk, which by that time had come out from the bay with all the archives and chests of the local administration on board. The commander of the Berdiansk did all he could to quicken her speed; but M'Gillop by the exceeding skill and rapidity of his movement out-manceuvred the fugitive, and—firing with shell—undertook to bar the passage against her. Two of her men were wounded by explosions effected on board her, and her commander convinced himself that she could not make good her escape. He therefore ran her on shore, and burnt her with all her cargo on board. The other two vessels (the Argonaut and the Goëts) which M'Gillop had engaged, were also, it seems, prevented by his skilful manœuvres from making good their escape, and the enemy with his own hands destroyed them.⁽¹⁾ The Snake was struck by a shot which passed through

M'Gillop's
exploits.

CHAP.
IV.The fate
of the
squadron.

the vessel, but she did not lose a man. Altogether, as may well be supposed, M'Gillop's exploit was enchanting to the numbers of eager seamen collected on board the two fleets.

Rear-Admiral Wulff, the same day, burnt down other vessels belonging to his unhappy squadron, and went on with the work of destruction till out of the fourteen vessels which had composed it there remained, it seems, only four. The four vessels preserved were all of them, however, war-steamers, and comparatively powerful.

With these, at 7 o'clock in the evening, Rear-Admiral Wulff moved out through the Straits, and got off into the Sea of Azof; but the escape, if so one may call it, brought, after all, only a respite soon followed by utter destruction.*

The Allied
navies;
their
operations.Channel
into the
Azof found
and
buoyed.

The Allied navies toiled all night long at the work of landing not only men, but horses, guns, stores of all kinds, and had hardly completed their task, when at 4 o'clock on the morning of the 25th, Captain Lyons of the *Miranda* despatched Mr. George Williams, the master of the ship, with orders to endeavour to find and buoy a channel through the Straits. This service the skilled, fearless officer achieved in the ship's gig and cutter under fire from the Russian battery still left on the Cheska Spit, "and between exploding and burning vessels which "had been sunk in the fairway and set on fire by "the enemy." By the channel thus found, Mr. George Williams passed through the Straits, and was the

* See *post*, p. 205, and p. 208.

first officer of the Allied forces to enter the Sea of Azof. At 10 o'clock the same morning Mr. Williams returned to the *Miranda*, and reported to his Captain that he had found and buoyed a channel of 16 feet. Captain Lyons immediately weighed, accompanied by the other vessels under his orders, and with these before long reached the goal of long expectation—the entrance of the Sea of Azof.

CHAP.
IV.

Miranda
reaching
the en-
trance of
the Sea of
Azof.

At 6 o'clock in the morning of the same auspicious day, Sir George Brown pushed forward the land forces, and marched upon Kertch, a remarkably clean well-built town of about 12,000 inhabitants. In "ordinary column of route" the Allied forces marched through the place, maintaining a great regularity and committing not the slightest disorder. Sir George felt it his duty to destroy an iron foundry which had cast guns and shot for the Czar; but no other harm was done at that time in the town.

Advance
of the land
forces
through
Kertch,

It was many days later that under a strong sense of duty and with great reluctance Sir George Brown destroyed a great quantity of corn provided for the enemy's troops.

The Allied troops continued their march, and by one o'clock reached Yenikale. There, established at the mouth of the Straits, Sir George was soon joyfully greeted by the Allied Admirals.

to Yenikale.
The
General
and the
Admirals
meeting.

This otherwise well-omened enterprise against the Kertchine Peninsula was unhappily marked by a stain which, though hardly discerned at the time by the more Western nations of Europe, must not be here screened from the light. The invasion

Disorders
that fol-
lowed the
invasion.

CHAP.
IV. — gave rise to disorder, and disorder was followed by crime.

For this the Allies, as I think, became justly open to censure, and the subject, though painful, is one that must not be shunned.

We cannot excuse the Allies by alleging that stir of the blood which comes with the clash of arms; for, whether in the process of landing, or in taking their rest on the shore, or in afterwards pursuing their march, the invaders from the first to the last encountered no sort of resistance; nor again can our country at once deliver herself from the charge by saying (as with truth she could say) that few, very few of our people were guilty of disorderly acts, and none of violent outrage; for he who commanded the troops of the three invading nations was an Englishman, and accordingly England stands challenged to answer the question which asks how the conquerors wielded their power.

The limited
authority
of Sir
George
Brown.

In fairness towards the memory of Sir George Brown, it must always be borne in mind that of the 15,000 men he commanded 3000 only were English, the rest consisting of French to the number of 7000, and of 5000 Turks; that except by making representations to General d'Autemarre he could not interfere with the discipline of the French troops; that, when busied in mischief, the soldiery of our excited Allies could be hardly restrained by their officers; and finally, that the traditions and instincts of the Frenchmen, the Turks, and the English collected under Sir George were far from being the

same, or even indeed at all similar on the theory of licence in war. CHAP.
IV.

Upon seeing the approach of the armada, the people of Kertch had been frightened, and the bulk of them fled from the place, taking refuge in the neighbouring villages.*

When Sir George Brown marched through the town on the morning of the 25th, he was met by a deputation of the principal inhabitants then left in the place, including the consuls for Austria and Naples. They declared to Sir George that the Russians had all of them fled from the town without leaving there any authority that could shield its deserted inhabitants from foes they described as "the Tartars"—men intending to come down upon them from the near country-side; and they implored Sir George Brown to leave some troops in the place for the protection of their lives and property.⁽²⁾ This Sir George refused flatly to do, protesting that he was not Governor of the country; and for any other protection than such as might be rendered appropriate by the conduct of his troops, he told them they had no claim upon him. Recommending the deputation to form a municipal council which might administer the police of the town, he continued his advance on Yeni Kalé.**

In the course of the march "our allies," as Sir George Brown distinguished them, spread out over the country for miles, and busied themselves with

Kertch.

Its prayer
to Sir
George.His rejection
of their
entreaties.Disorders
on the
march;

* Todleben, vol. II. p. 283.

** Sir George Brown at Yeni Kalé to Lord Raglan, 27th and 28th May.

CHAP.
IV.and in
Yeni Kalé.Cessation
of all mis-
conduct of
the English
troops.Measures
taken by
Sir George
for the
mainte-
nance of
discipline;

their result.

the "sport" of shooting pigs, sheep, fowls, ducks, and—supremely amusing!—tame geese. Such indulgence on the part of invaders might perhaps be called trivial, but it weakened the bonds of discipline. After occupying Yeni Kalé, our allies, Sir George says, "broke away in their old style;"* and, most of the inhabitants having fled, forced open the houses, and not only gutted the town, but set it on fire in two places. Unhappily, some of our soldiers—not any, however, of those who were under the eyes of their officers—permitted themselves for a while to follow the example in part, and prove guilty of conduct pronounced to be far, "very far from blameless;"** but though erring on that first afternoon, when the instinct of "sport" was awakened, they did not again go astray.***

The next morning Sir George Brown concurred with General d'Autemarre in appointing a French officer to act as commandant of Yeni Kalé for police purposes, with support from an English provost-marshal and assistants, and having at his disposal three companies of infantry, two French and one English.

Commanding the means thus provided, the French, says Sir George, showed great zeal in repressing the sins of the Turks; but for the task of restraining their own men, the French officers seemed wholly powerless. It was "pitiable," wrote Sir George, "to see their faces" when asked to undertake such a

* From one "Peninsular officer" to another this phrase expressed a good deal.

** By Sir George Brown, 27th and 28th May. [*** Ibid.

duty.* The Turks were not undeserving of the keen efforts made to restrain them. They, day after day, proved guilty of committing horrible outrages.**

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IV.

On the same day, the 26th, a second deputation from Kertch came before Sir George Brown at Yeni Kalé, informing him that the dread expectation of the day before had become a reality, that the town was in a state of anarchy, and that "the Tartars," as they called them, were plundering and destroying everything. In the face of this appeal, Sir George again refused to give the place any garrison; but a vessel of war at his instance was promptly moved into the bay. The unfortunate people of Kertch found means to arm for their protection a body of fifty men of various nationalities; and this small improvised force proved firm and courageous in dealing with isolated outrages committed by stragglers, as for instance when they promptly shot down several Turks whilst resisting attempts to arrest them for knocking out the brains of a child;*** but—weak in numbers—these guards did not seemingly try—and so far as I know, were not ordered—to drive out the plundering Tartars.

The Tar-
tars in
Kertch
destroying
and plun-
dering.

The mea-
sures taken
by Brown
and by the
people of
Kertch.

When the Kertch deputation had left his headquarters, Sir George was informed that some boats' crews, both English and French, had been getting into the town, and doing there even more mischief than the people called "Tartars." He therefore

* Sir George Brown, 27th and 28th May.

** Sir George Brown to Lord Raglan, 29th May.

*** Ibid. They, it seems, killed one, and seriously wounded the rest.

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IV.

determined to send—on the morrow—an infantry regiment accompanied by twenty Hussars to the Quarantine Station near Kertch, with orders to send detachments patrolling into the town, and, if possible, to restore order by giving countenance and support to such provisional authority as might be established.*

On the same day, however, Sir George received a letter from Captain Loaring, commanding the *Furious*—the vessel sent into the bay—which stated that the uproar in the town was worse than ever, and called for immediate assistance.

Sir George thereupon sent off a body of twenty Hussars with orders to go to Kertch, and there “see what was the matter”; but he had conceived the idea that the attack by the so-called “Tartars” was almost “a revolt of the Tartar population” with which he ought not to meddle, and this so much the more since he thought that the aggressors—described to be “Tartars”—were—not enemies to the Allies but—their friends, who indeed more than once had captured and brought in Russian prisoners from even great distances; and he determined not to interfere “further than to protect the weak from outrage.”**

The exception, it seems, applied only to the case of an outrage attempted in sight of the Hussars when patrolling; for in any larger sense “to protect the weak from outrage” was substantially of course the same thing as maintaining peace in the town, and that last course of action was one which Sir

* Sir George Brown to Lord Raglan, 27th and 28th May.

** Ibid.

George had resolved not to take. "I distinctly said," he informed the inhabitants, "that they must take care of themselves, and were not to look to me for protection. . . . I decline to furnish any guards."*

Sir George Brown's expedient of patrolling into the town twice a-day from the precincts of the Quarantine Station must have brought fitful intervals of relief to the fear-stricken people of Kertch, who at each of the times for patrolling, and whilst in sight of the horsemen, might believe themselves safe for at least a few minutes, or perhaps half an hour, but the measure did nothing towards either expelling the Tartars or putting an end to their outrages. All that seemed to be needed for restoring order was the voice of authority, and authority resting on force—for the 79th was at hand—Sir George Brown amply possessed; but for reasons we have heard him disclosing he resolved not to use the spell.

Failure of
the mea-
sures
taken.

Most of the houses deserted by Russian occupiers—and these formed the main part of the town—were plundered and gutted;** as were also indeed, we are told, nearly all of the other buildings.*** From some houses the roofs were torn off, and their timbers used for firing. The hospitals even were pillaged.†

Continued
disorders
in Kertch,

Sir George Brown had at one time agreed with General d'Autemarre to place a guard over the Museum in Kertch; but he afterwards abandoned

* To Lord Raglan, 10th June.

** Sir George to Lord Raglan, 4th June.

*** Todleben, vol. II. p. 284.

† Ibid,

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IV.

the project, because convinced that, if small, the guard might not be secure; and that one of sufficient strength could hardly be spared for the purpose.* The Museum thus left to its fate was gutted, was plundered; and, unless General Todleben erred, or for once wrote in irony, the plundering of the institution was perpetrated by hunters after "antiquities"—men who also, he says, pushed their search down to even the tombs of the dead.**

The com-
mitters of
outrage.

By whom were these outrages perpetrated? They were perpetrated, it would seem, in the main by the native marauders called "Tartars"; but in part by "boats'-crews" from both fleets, and in part too by straggling soldiers—some French and some Turkish—who, despite the commands of their officers, had found their way into the town.

The commander of the expedition proved happily able to say that amongst all the "stragglers" engaged in these crimes and outrages not one English soldier, as far as he knew, had been seen.***

Further
continu-
ance of the
disorders
in Kertch.

So late as the second week of June, when Sir George Brown at length was preparing to quit the invaded peninsula, he still could not say that in Kertch the reign of disorder had ceased. People there, he indeed plainly wrote—so late as the 10th of June—were "in terror of their lives for the "Tartars."†

* Sir George Brown to Lord Raglan, 10th June.

** Todleben, vol. II. p. 284.

*** Sir George Brown to Lord Raglan, 10th June.

† To Lord Raglan. If not strictly orthodox English, Brown's use of the "for" is good Scotch.

Lord Raglan heard with warm indignation of the earlier disorders afflicting a part of the conquered territory; but when he had read the two first of Brown's letters on this painful subject, he thought well of the orders Sir George appeared to have given, pronouncing them to be "very good"; and accordingly he cherished a hope that they "would prevent all further excesses";* but the hope, we know, was not fulfilled; and a criticism rendered complete by basing it on the later as well as the earlier letters was averted by the stress of events.

CHAP.
IV.

Lord Raglan's indignation.

His approval on 31st May of Brown's measures.

His completed criticism averted.

For not having repressed the disorders of the French troops, Sir George Brown, in common justice, could hardly have been treated as answerable by even the strictest of judges; for, although he indeed on this subject could freely make representations to our Allies, his authority as the chief in command did not otherwise include any power to meddle at all with the discipline of General d'Autemarre's troops;** and the expedient of remonstrating against their offences with either General d'Autemarre himself or any other French officer was a tender matter, and dangerous, whilst also in general likely to prove, as we have seen, wholly barren. Sir George did not of course deserve blame for omitting to use a power with which he was not really armed.

Sir George not blameable for omitting to repress the disorders of the French;

because virtually unable to do so.

The Quarantine Station of Kertch was not only well separated from the rest of the town, but so

Comment on Sir George's

* Lord Raglan to Sir George, 31st May.

** Instructions of 2d May, incorporated by reference with those of the 21st.

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IV.

course of
action with
respect to
the dis-
orders in
Kertch.

Friendly
disposition
of some of
the Tar-
tars.

spacious as to be capable of holding some 5000 men; and Brown's plan of posting in it a foot regiment with a score of Hussars was good so far as it went; but in mercy to the unfortunate inhabitants, no less than for the advantage of the invaders, it ought to have been rendered effective by establishing authority in the town, and promptly restoring order.

It is true that Sir George's idea of regarding the violent Tartars as people in arms against Russia was not without a semblance of warranty; for the coming of War—beloved War—to their long-conquered, Czar-ridden steppe had roused in these men grand emotions deriving from the blood of their ancestors; so that—touching, pathetic recurrence to forefathers great in the saddle!—a band of them, all poorly armed, yet mounted, every one of them, on ponies, if not bigger horses, came riding over the steppe, came enlisting themselves, they imagined, for war to the knife against Russia, with before them the rapturous prospect of recovering their old independence. They were men in a dream, but their dream was coherent, and not altogether unshared by the English commander. As already they had given an earnest of their simple, rude “foreign policy” by bringing in Russians as prisoners to the camp of the invader, so now—in arms, and on horseback—they offered him a warlike alliance with the once mighty Golden Horde.

Sir George apparently thought they might prove to be in some sort the Spaniards, or even the tried Portuguese of his early and glorious days; but ought

he to have purchased the friendship of even the Golden Horde at so heavy, so painful a cost as that of allowing a town within easy reach of his camp to lie seething day after day, and even week after week, in the agonies of a slow doubtful strife with bands of men—not perhaps murderous, but—intent on destruction and pillage?

The enemy's forces had vanished without attempting resistance; and, there being therefore no prospect of fights on the Kertchine Peninsula, it is hard to see how an alliance with its Tartar inhabitants could be of more worth to the invader than peaceful, friendly relations with a well-ordered seaport town (lying midway between his headquarters and his works near Fort Paul) which was yearning to receive at his hands the blessings of protection and government. If only for the sake of withdrawing irresistible temptations to crime from the reach of the Allied forces, there was seemingly reason enough for repressing disorder in Kertch; for the town, as we know, was within a short walk from the camps, within a pleasant row from the ships, and could not but prove attractive to many young soldiers and sailors when known to be in the throes of a conflict involving such tumult as would offer them adventures and licence.

From the pillaging of the hospitals at Kertch, from the flight of the Russian inhabitants, and finally from the state of anarchy which long afflicted the town, it resulted that the sick and wounded Russians who had been brought thither from Sebastopol were

Sufferings
entailed on
the sick
and
wounded
Russians
by the
pillaging
of the
hospitals.

CHAP.
IV.

Letter on
their be-
half from
Baron
Wrangel.

exposed to the sufferings caused by not only want of appliances, but also want of due care.*

It was in favour of those hospital patients that, when about to retreat, Baron Wrangel had addressed an appeal to the commander of the invading force, recommending them to his kindness and humanity;** but of course, when taking that step, the Baron had assumed that the Allied troops would be in the occupation of Kertch, and in point of fact, as we have learnt, no such occupation took place. It was therefore antecedently probable that the letter would find no recipient, and I am led on other grounds to believe that it never in fact reached Sir George.*** Whether brought to its destination or not, the letter remained unanswered.

It would be miserable to have to believe that any English commander proved deaf to such an appeal; and this all the more since we know that the Russians were habitually treating our prisoners of war in their hospitals with careful and generous kindness.†

When, as shown in an earlier page, the General and the Admirals met at the entrance of the Azof,

* Instructions of 2d May, incorporated by reference with those of the 21st.

** Ibid.

*** There is no mention of it in the correspondence; and Sir George was so full a writer that the absence of any such mention is scarce short of actual proof that the letter was never received.

† Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, 19th May 1855, a published despatch, p. 167 in Sayer's Collection.

they already had achieved no small part of their appointed task. CHAP.
IV.

The first gains that accrued to the Allies from their newly acquired dominion in the Kertchine Peninsula were:— First re-
sults of the
Kertch ex-
pedition.

1. The capture of all the enemy's Coast batteries in the neighbourhood of the Straits, and of the 62 guns which had armed them—guns throwing a weight of metal which reached in one salvo to 2376 pounds.*

2. The capture of guns not in battery, amounting with the 62 above mentioned to upwards of one hundred, many of them of the largest calibre and of the best construction.**

3. The ruin of the squadron of Kertch—ruin prompt as regarded the fate reserved for ten of its vessels, and, as to the four still afloat, ruin only staved off a few hours. The squadron thus brought to destruction by the hands of its own people carried guns of which three were 68-pounders, but the shot it threw in one salvo had only a weight of 1026 pounds.***

4. The acquisition by the Allies of several enemy's merchant-vessels, and of vast quantities of corn which the captors either appropriated or destroyed, and of 17,000 tons of coal secured for the use of their squadrons.

* Todleben, vol. II. p. 269.

** Sir George Brown to Lord Raglan, 27th May, correcting his former despatch.

*** Todleben, vol. II. p. 267.

CHAP.
IV.The main
object
gained.

5. The destruction by the enemy himself of a vast amount of property belonging to the Russian Government, and conducive to its service in war.

6. But the great advantage of all was of course the one sought from the first by those who had planned the expedition—the opening of the Straits of Kertch, and the free way thus won to the Sea of Azof with all the consequential results of which we are going to hear.

These advantages were, all of them, gained without the loss of a man.

II.

The Allied
Admirals
entering
the Sea of
Azof.

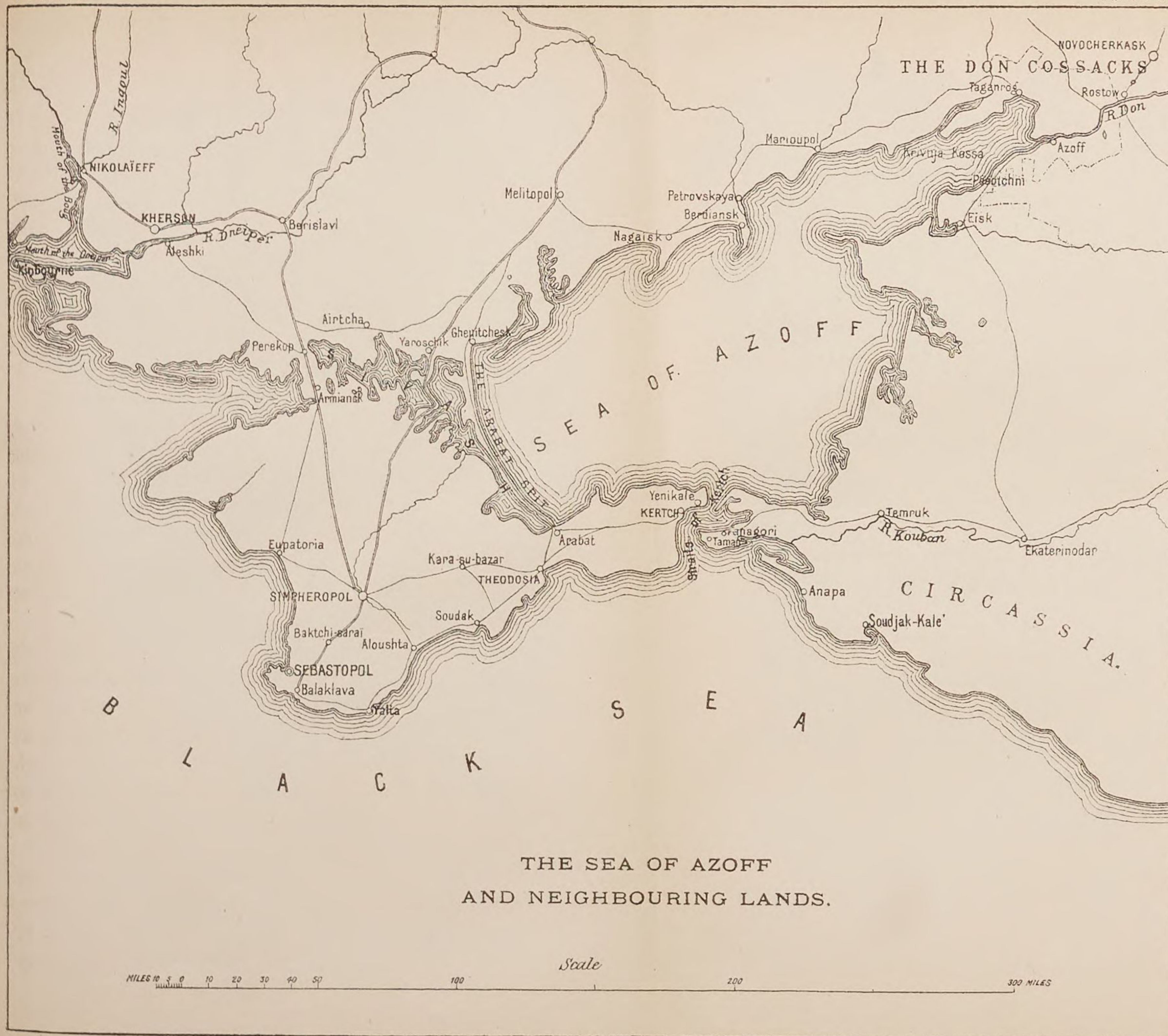
A few hours only had passed after the opening of the Straits, when a joint flotilla of French and English steam-vessels with the two Admirals on board moved out into what till that day had been the “closed” Sea of Azof, and so, as it were, took possession of the waters then all at once added to the dominion of the Maritime Powers.

Captain
Lyons of
the Mi-
randa then
taking the
command
of the
united
flotilla.

On the same afternoon, the flags of the Admirals were hauled down, and the command of the flotilla then passed to Captain Lyons of the *Miranda*, the son of our Naval Chief, for he was the senior officer; but the immediate command of the vessels which composed the French part of the flotilla belonged to M. Sédaiges, an excellent chief of whom the senior (Lyons) wrote always in terms of warm praise.

Nature of
the opera-
tions
undertaken
in the Sea
of Azof.

The operations that followed must not of course be regarded as so many acts of proud war undertaken in pursuit of a conquest, but rather as measures required for enforcing those new rights of ownership



which the passage of the Straits had conferred. The task of Captain Lyons in the Sea of Azof and the tangible part of its shores was analogous to that of a colonel or major-general who, having been appointed the governor of a lately conquered province, must bring it under subjection to the newly acceding authority.

CHAP.
IV.

Still, it seems fit on public grounds to show how a sea newly opened in what till the day before had been the interior of Russia was taken in hand by the squadrons.

The shoal at the mouths of the Don forbade hope of flight for all vessels with more than a small draught of water; and the sight of hostile flags in this sea—so lately a sure sea of refuge—sufficed to make the enemy's Admiral run ashore, and burn down his four surviving war-steamers—surviving as we saw, out of that which, until dispersed by M'Gillop, had been "The squadron of Kertch."

Fate of the four surviving war-ships of the Kertch squadron.

After this hastened act of despondency the Russians had no vessel left with which to watch, much less oppose the advance of their naval invader. Young Lyons found himself master—the undisturbed unchallenged master—of what a few hours before had been a fast closed Russian lake surrounded on all sides by Russian provinces, and affording them a natural outlet, a privileged highway of their own.

Unchallenged mastery of the Allies in the hitherto "closed" sea.

Long accustomed to have it imagined that they could not be assailed with impunity in the trunk of their empire, Russians bitterly felt the sharp thrust which a new irresistible power was now—with strange ease—driving home. How deep the thrust

Access thus obtained to the interior provinces of Russia; as, *e. g.*, to the country

CHAP.
IV.
of the Don
Cossacks.

went, people easily saw when observing that the easternmost of the provinces coerced by the Maritime Powers, and unable thenceforth to send out so much as a sail or a boat from the mouths of its own famous river, was the one that furnished to Russia her Kozaks, or "Cossacks of the Don"—men deemed so transcendently Russian that—although, as I think, without justice—the figurative diction of many (including the great Napoleon) has made the name of their race an equivalent for Russia herself. By the French more especially, who had heard what their mothers could tell them of "The Cossacks! the Cossacks! the Cossacks!" there well might be felt strange emotions when—along with a now friendly England—outstretching the long naval arm, and touching the westernmost nests of that once notorious horde which, however disregarded as combatants, had as plunderers startled the France of an earlier and horrible time. Those were men who, not quitting their saddles, would trot up the stairs of the palace or the house they were going to despoil, and ride straight into a drawing-room on horses well used like themselves to the piteous screaming of women.⁽³⁾

The seat of
industry
that Lyons
disturbed.

What Lyons disturbed on the Sea and the shores of the Azof was a vast seat of industry, but industry plainly devoted to the business of war. The shipping engaged, it is true, was but lately the shipping of commerce bearing corn to foreign ports; but it had been brought into the service of the Czar for commissariat purposes, and was busied in transporting supplies for the use of Prince Gortchakoff's army. To this end alone were corn-stores lining the beach, and

unarmed vessels plying in hundreds. It was the right and the duty of Lyons to destroy, if he could, the foundations of all this hostile activity.

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IV.

The Allies having no troops on board, and the enemy having no war-ships, there could not of course well take place any great engagement between them; and no one reading what follows must hearken at all for a battle, but rather think of the task committed to some naval officer who is ordered to tear out the nest of inveterate contrabandistas, and seize their forfeited goods.

His task
not one
leading to
battle.

With regard to those unarmed vessels busied in the transport of food that could be caught by war-steamers at sea, the task of course was an easy one; but Lyons and M. Sédaiges, and the officers and crews of both the united squadrons, agreed to make it easier still. At the sacrifice of their pecuniary interests, they agreed to forego their clear right of bringing the craft before prize courts, and to substitute destruction for capture.

His task
against
vessels
found at
sea;

It was only when applied to those vessels which had fled towards the land for shelter, or else to the ranges of corn-stacks and other Government property disposed on some parts of the shore, that the task of destruction left room for the skill and the daring of seamen.

and those
that had
fled to-
wards
land.

From an anchorage it found off the lighthouse on the Spit of Berdiansk the united flotilla commanded the harbour as well as the beach; and—covered by the fire it delivered—the boats of both the squadrons effected a landing under Commander Sherard Osborn. The men who had landed de-

26th May.
Operation
off the Spit
of Ber-
diansk.

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IV.

stroyed the vessels in port, and afterwards other craft found at a distance of nearly four miles. They also burnt a Government store.

Several steamers detached from the squadron were meanwhile chasing such vessels as could be descried out at sea.

The wrecks
of the four
war-steam-
ers that
had es-
caped from
Kertch.

When off the beach of Berdiansk, Captain Lyons there found run on shore, and burnt down to the water's edge, those four Russian steamers of war which had escaped—for a while—from Kertch with their leader Rear-Admiral Wulff. It is dismal, after all, to be seeing the very, very end, and last obsequies of even an enemy's squadron. The unhappy Rear-Admiral's flag was still flying from the wreck of the Moloditz.

27th May.
Off the
town of
Berdiansk.

From a position commanding the town and also the beach some small-armed men and marines from both of the squadrons were landed under Commander Lambert, and they destroyed many vessels as well as some Government corn-stores. Steamers also meanwhile intercepted the craft that were seeking to escape by flying for the mouths of the Don.

28th May.
Lyons en-
gaging the
port of
Arabat.

From a position off Arabat, Captain Lyons engaged the fort and blew up a caisson of ammunition. The vessels caught outside the Straits were all destroyed.

Plan of
summoning
the autho-
rities.

In so far as they could without derogating from the performance of their duty, Captain Lyons and M. Sédaiges were intent on the avoidance of measures that might harm the peaceful inhabitants in either person or property; and, before undertaking to execute the works of destruction ordained at

Genitchi, at Taganrog, at Marionpol, and at Gheisk, they summoned the authorities in each place to surrender the vessels and the Government property which they meant to destroy; but in every instance (except that of Gheisk) they were met by what, judged from its words, was a thoroughly decisive refusal, and driven therefore to execute the forcible measures required for enabling them to compass their object.

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IV.

The rejections they elicited.

Judged, I have said, from its language; but, none must therefore imagine that the acts of these men in authority corresponded with their words of defiance. Because valiantly sounding, those words were perhaps for the moment delightful to the ear of the much-deceived Czar, but we shall see that they were not followed up by the manful resistance they promised. Of all the three local commanders who successively hurled defiance one certainly attempted resistance, but only of the most feeble kind, which did not cause a loss to the Allies of so much as even one life; and the other two, when danger came, simply marched off their troops, without fighting, to distant places of safety.

These compared with the acts of the authorities professing defiance.

Genitchi was a town on the straits called after its name which connect the Sea of Azof with the inner waters of the Sivache. Apprehending that, if the Allies should prove able to enter those waters, they might operate against his communications by the north of the Crimea, Prince Gortchakoff but a few days before had not only reinforced the garrison of Genitchi, but had also sent into the place a new governor, Colonel Prince Lobanoff-Rostoffsky, with instructions to organise the defence of the Straits.

Operations at Genitchi, 29th May.

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IV.

When the new governor found himself summoned to abstain from all defence of the vessels and Government property at Genitchi, he rejected the demand in high-spirited language, which, supposing it about to be followed by corresponding action, was right and becoming; but the sequel of his warlike response seems beyond measure strange. Though he did not recall the defiance, Prince Lobanoff-Rostoffsky “not choosing to expose his troops to useless losses, withdrew them to a distance of five versts from the town:”* thus leaving the unarmed inhabitants to face the dangers created by him who had rejected the summons, and to see a chief follow up his proud words of defiance by marching off the whole garrison to a place of safety!

It may well have been fitting to refuse the demanded surrender, or—under a contrary view—to withdraw the troops without fighting; but how the man could—with honour—adopt both the courses of action, and leave unarmed people to suffer for all his vainglorious words, I have not been able to see.

By shelling a part of Genitchi, the squadrons opened a way through the Straits for the boats sent in under Mackenzie. The lieutenant and his men soon pushed through to the place of imagined safety which the fugitive vessels had reached, and set fire to them all (they were 73 in number) as well as to the great stores of corn there collected by the Russian Government.

The boats had returned to the ships, when men saw that other, though more distant, vessels were

* Todleben, vol. II. p. 289.

within reach, and that—turned by a change of wind —the fire was losing its hold on the range of the enemy's corn-stores. CHAP.
IV.

Thereupon Lyons resumed his fire on the place, and once more sent in the boats under Lieutenant Mackenzie, who destroyed the more distant vessels which had previously escaped destruction.

The service of landing on a part of the beach out of gunshot from the squadron, and, a second time, firing the corn-stores in the teeth of the Russians there seen to be gathered, seemed one of a desperate kind; and, supposing the enterprise to be attempted by a considerable body of men, it promised to involve a painful sacrifice of life; but three fearless officers—Lieutenant Buckley of the *Miranda*, Lieutenant Burgoyne of the *Swallow*, and Mr. John Roberts, gunner of the *Ardent*, volunteered to achieve the object with their own unaided hands; and, Captain Lyons accepting their offer, they not only accomplished the task, but then happily made good their way back in spite of all the Cossacks endeavouring to cut them off from their boat. That day, 90 merchant-vessels and corn-stores supposed to be worth £100,000 were destroyed.

Those shoals off the mouths of the Don which had forbidden all hope of escape for the enemy's squadron of Kertch, now seemed to be defending Taganrog and the adjacent shore from the enterprises of Captain Lyons and M. Sédaiges; for in even its "Inner" roadstead, the flotilla of the

1st to 3d
June.
Operations
at Tagan-
rog and the
mouths of
the Don,

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IV.

Allies (as a whole) was kept far out at a distance of nearly 10 miles from the shore.”*

There existed, however, some channels lying open to the incursion of vessels with a very light draught, such, for instance, as the English Recruit or the French Mouette; and although, as might well be expected, the enemy had taken good care to remove the lights and the beacons, it was possible for the skill of the seamen to re-discover (by sounding) the veins of deeper—though still shallow—water that found their way through the shoal.

Taganrog, we know, was a place where the vast supplies brought down the Don lay stored on the beach; and the problem requiring solution asked how to effect the destruction of these warlike treasures whilst defended from naval aggression by a shoal ten miles broad, and by more than 3000 troops.

The resources for this purpose owned by Lyons and M. Sédaiges consisted only as yet of those vessels both few and small which, like the Recruit and Mouette, could make their way over the shoal. They brought with them, of course, their ships' companies, each including its share of marines, but had otherwise no troops on board.

In the night of the 1st of June, Lieutenant Day found a channel for his craft, the Recruit—a vessel that drew little water—and, the next morning, going on board her, Captain Lyons reconnoitred the town.

Since (with only the stated exceptions) the vessels composing the squadrons were—because of the shoal

* At first only $8\frac{1}{2}$, but increased to 10 miles by a change of wind and a consequent fall of 3 feet in the depth of the water.

—lying off the town and port of Taganrog at a distance of nearly ten miles, the question was how, without them, to provide such a fire as would cover the landing of men. The seamen bent their minds to the problem; and Commander Cowper Coles of the Stromboli contrived a raft which would pass over the shoals with a gun of 42 cwt. well planted in battery; whilst Lieutenant-Commander Horton of the Ardent imagined, and constructed with hammocks, what the men called “a bed”—a bed so disposed on board the pinnacle of his ship, that it furnished the needed support for a 32-pounder in action. Due experiment afterwards proved that the raft and the pinnacle thus planned would, each of them, answer its purpose; and, with only those means of attack which have now been sufficiently indicated, the French and English captains agreed that their endeavours to burn down the stores which the Czar had collected at Taganrog should begin the next day, the 3d, at 3 o’clock in the morning.

But at sunset—despatched opportunely by Admiral Lyons—there hove in sight three river-steamers, light enough to move over the shoal, and carrying, each, one or more guns, with also twelve launches withdrawn from the line-of-battle ships. This welcome reinforcement supplied the exact means of action required for closing upon the enemy’s stores in spite of the shoal which protected them.

From the way in which these welcome means were about to be used, it resulted that launches and other less boats would, this time, be expected to render the same kind of service as that which a fleet

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IV.

any day undertakes when, by pouring down fire on a beach, it covers a landing of troops. The measureless inferiority of any mere boats as compared with a man-of-war was to be compensated by the power they had of coming to much closer quarters with an enemy arrayed on the shore.

On the morning of the 3d of June (after duly concerting his measures with M. Sédaiges) Captain Lyons, on board the *Recruit*, advanced to an anchorage only 1400 yards from the mole-head, having with him the other light-draught vessels, both English and French, which were all of them towing their launches. On board one of the French light-draught vessels thus brought through the shoal to the front M. Sédaiges was present in person.

With the boats all collected astern of their vessels, Captain Lyons and M. Sédaiges awaited the Governor's answer to their summons.* The answer came after a while from General Krasnoff—an answer importing that he rejected the terms, and that having troops at his disposal, he meant to defend the place.⁽⁴⁾

Then down ran the flag of truce which, since the despatch of the summons, Captain Lyons had shown from the mast-head of the little *Recruit*, and off moved the launches and boats which till then had been lying astern. Cowper Coles of the *Stromboli* commanded them, and in company with them, under the immediate orders of Captain Le Jeune, the French boats also moved forward. When all had

* What the terms of each summons were has been before shown. See *ante*, p. 209.

reached the chosen position, the tow was cast off, and "the boats' heads," as Lyons expressed it, "pulled round to the beach." If borrowing land-service diction, one might say, I suppose, that from column the boats opened out into line. They began to deliver their fire against the enemy's troops, now seen to be on the alert, and desiring, if they could, to defend the vast range of the Government stores.

The Russian troops or their leaders appeared to understand very well that, in order to defend the stores, they must come down towards the beach in the teeth of the fire from our boats; and, though feebly, they made several efforts to effect this advance. From time to time some of the bolder of them came down near to the Government stores, but never in numbers sufficient to make good their attempted defence; and accordingly it resulted that, from the first to the last, the enemy remained fended off from the strip of ground under dispute.

By thus fending off the Czar's troops, Captain Lyons and M. Sédaiges laid open a way for the second stage of their enterprise.

With a separate division of light boats carrying rockets and one gun on board, Lieutenant Mackenzie covered the approach of Lieutenant Cecil Buckley, who in a four-oared gig, accompanied by Mr. Henry Cooper, boatswain, and manned by volunteers, repeatedly landed and fired the stores and Government buildings. By 3 o'clock in the afternoon, all the long ranges of stores of grain, planks and tar, and the vessels on the stocks, were in a blaze, as were also the Custom-house and other Government buildings.

CHAP.
IV.

The good
seaman-
ship mani-
fested by
the French
and the
English.

The destruction included a Russian war-schooner, with also a Russian guardship; but it was by the enemy's own hands that that last vessel perished.⁽⁵⁾

So great was the skill exerted by the seamen both English and French, that though operating for three days amid shoals of vast extent, they did not from the first to the last encounter a single mishap.

From the feebleness of the Russian defence it resulted that the Allies were enabled to achieve their whole object without either inflicting any serious loss, or themselves losing even one life. They only lost one marine wounded; the Russians losing one soldier killed, and twelve more or less slightly wounded. The enemy's rejection of the summons had been proudly, defiantly worded; but the sacrifice it involved was left to fall much more severely on hapless non-combatants than on that newly reinforced body of from three to four thousand soldiers which had feebly resisted the landing, and had hardly, if at all, interfered with the steady work of destruction effected under their eyes.

Of the peaceful inhabitants eleven were killed, and forty-seven otherwise stricken.*

The defence from its weakness afforded of course a poor sequel to those high-toned words of rejection with which the summons was met, and seemed even to annul the whole warrant for a course of proceeding which subjected the peaceful inhabitants to losses of life and property. None could say that the victims were sacrificed to the exigencies of a valiant defence.

* Todleben, vol. II. p. 291.

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IV.

Marionpol was a place on the only highroad then left to the enemy for effecting his communications between the country of the Don and the Crimea; and Colonel Kostrukoff, there commanding, affected to defy the summons brought him from Lyons and M. Sédaiges; but the Allies quickly landed some men, and thereupon the whole garrison, consisting of some hundreds of Cossacks, was at once marched off without fighting to a place of safety. The town thenceforth remained for five hours in the hands of the Allies. The Allies took care to destroy the great stores of grain in the place, but did no harm to the town.⁽⁶⁾

At Gheisk, the authorities yielded to the exigency of the summons, and a vast quantity of hay and corn was destroyed.

By a skilful manœuvre of his vessel, the Ardent, in deep water found near the shore, Lieutenant Horton proved able to land from Kiten Bay Mr. Roberts the gunner; and he with but two men to aid him destroyed sacks of flour collected for embarkation to the number of about 30,000.

It was not within the time limited by the bounds of this Narrative that Sherard Osborn and Hewett completed the work of destruction or obtained (as they did before long) the control of the Arabat Spit—that singular natural causeway thrown up between the two seas which, with scarce room for anything

5th June.
Operations
at Marion-
pol.

Operations
at Gheisk.
6th June.

9th June.
Operations
on the
shore of
Kiten Bay.

CHAP.
IV.

else, still carried the imperial post-road a distance of some eighty miles, and therefore seemed precious to Russia.

Losses of
the Rus-
sians;

of the
Allies;

Causes of
their im-
munity.

From all these operations recounted in the Sea of Azof, there resulted a loss to the enemy's combative forces of a few score men killed or wounded, and to the Allies a loss of two men wounded.

This happy immunity from serious loss proved superbly the seaman-like qualities of young Lyons and M. Sédaiges and the officers and men acting under them—sailors charged with duties which aimed at firm repression, not conquest, and at what was rather forcible government than flagrant war between equals. The immunity, we can see, was obtained by unfailing presence of mind, by a naval skill ever ready for each successive emergency, and withal by the well-applied daring of particular men. Thus, when Lieutenant Cecil Buckley and John Roberts (gunner) at Genitchi, and Cecil Buckley again with Henry Cooper (boatswain) at Taganrog volunteered to undertake special services of a hazardous kind, they effectually compassed their objects, but they did something more. By dispensing with the aid of numbers, they plainly averted the evil of having to risk many lives.

The object
of the
Allies.

The Allies put themselves to the pain of destroying these vast stores of food, because they had ventured to hope on what at the time seemed good grounds that the check which their measure imposed on the flow of supplies to the enemy would impair, if not bring to an end, his protracted defence of

Sebastopol; but Russia, as was afterwards known, CHAP.
IV.
 had already provisioned her army engaged under This in
 Gortchakoff for the whole of the then pending year, great mea-
 and was not therefore brought to extremities by sure
 losses which rather affected the great reserve maga- baffled.
 zines than any immediate wants.

The havoc, however, was great. In the first four Greatness
of the
havoc.
 days of the operations in the Sea of Azof, it already
 included the destruction of 246 vessels, a number
 soon augmented to one which our admiral pronounced
 to be "nearly 500"; and on the 2d of June (a day
 long antecedent to the close of the destructive opera-
 tions) he officially stated that the destructive opera-
 tions conducted in the Sea of Azof had already
 overtaken a quantity of flour and corn which, if
 added to what was destroyed by the hands of the
 Russians themselves (as shown by their Custom-house
 books), would have furnished rations for four months
 to an army of 100,000 men.*

Of the vessels destroyed very many were Greek; Many of
the de-
stroyed
vessels
Greek:
 and supposing, as I do, that the Czar was not with-
 out just, kingly pride, this bare fact must have
 touched to the quick his sense of honour and dignity. the bearing
of this cir-
cumstance
on the
Czar's
sense of
dignity.
 He had welcomed these gifted people, then warmly
 disposed towards his cause, making use of their toil
 and their property in what I have—not wrongly—
 called the interior of his empire, and yet there, even
 there, he had found himself unable to shield them
 from the power of his naval invaders.

The merely physical losses sustained by the Czar The moral
stress put

* Admiral Lyons to Lord Raglan, 2d June 1855.

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IV.

on Russia
by taking
the Sea of
Azof.

Did the
Czar's in-
capacity to
defend his
subjects
tend at all
to shake
their old
loyalty?

were as nothing when put in comparison with the moral torture applied by carrying a naval invasion straight into the trunk of his empire.

If—fermenting in the midst of a people good, kindly, humane, and still (in the mass) truly loyal—an outburst of truculent doctrine has of late seemed to hedge round the Czars with assassins instead of adorers, it does not of course at all follow that the origin of this hateful wickedness can safely be traced up to causes in force at the time of the war; but in spite of its Byzantine taint, what people call the “Czar-worship” is not, after all, quite so slavish, so utterly abject a posture of trembling humanity as many believe when they hear of the grandiose prayers and thanksgivings which Moscow offers up to its idol. Much, in that respect, like other loyalty to other sovereigns, the “worship” of the Czar rests in part on the floating idea that its votaries are accustomed to form of his power—his genuine power on earth, and, not least, his power to defend them from enemies with whom he has quarrelled.

In so far as the creed was thus based, it lay open of course to a shock, when young Lyons (with Captain Sédaiges) began to touch the empire at home.

The *Miranda* had broken a spell. Till she passed through the Straits with her following on the 25th of May, the Azof had been a real province—a sea-clad province of Russia; and, for men on its shores to be witnessing the severance of such a possession from the Czar's inner territories, to be under a ban for the crime—the strangely new crime—of being

his faithful subjects engaged in his actual service, to see how Russian commanders with infantry under their orders comported themselves in those hours when mass after mass of carefully harvested wealth was in course of being burnt to the ground because it belonged to their sovereign, but moreover to know that the Czar's lieutenants (including Prince Lobanoff-Rostoffsky) were men who could act in the way we were painfully forced to observe,—all this, if at first only startling, may perhaps have begun before long to disenchant some of the votaries who long had been steady enough in the practice of humble Czar-worship.

It was natural that the change should be slow. Men might long go on dimly imagining that their old faith was sound; but, whether conscious or not of the change coming over their minds, they were plainly dragged far on the road which leads from darkness to light when forced to see, as they did from the shores of the Azof, that their Czar, if, as always, divine, was still for the moment at best an unsuccessful Divinity.

In proportion to its disturbing effect on the mind of the humble Don Cossack, or any other poor shoresman, the loss of the Sea of Azof was tormenting of course to his rulers, and all the more, since they knew that its severance from the Czar's dominions was so far definitive that perforce it would have to be borne, until the Invaders at last should choose to grant Russia a peace.

CHAP.
IV.

III.

Attack on
Soudjak-
Kalé and
Anapa
recom-
mended.

The forces, both naval and military, which had opened the Straits of Kertch lay assembled at no great distance from Soudjak-Kalé and Anapa, then held by Russia on the Circassian coast; and a prompt attack on these strongholds was eagerly counselled by Lyons.

Troops
despatched
for the
purpose.

First, Lord Raglan, then General Péliissier, adopted our admiral's project; and, to carry it into effect, a body of three thousand infantry—two-thirds of it French, one-third English—with a detachment of English artillery and fifteen 32-pounder battering guns was quickly despatched to Sir George Brown.

Fall of
Soudjak-
Kalé.

Divining apparently the purpose of the Allies, General Khoumatoff determined that, without awaiting the expected attack, Soudjak-Kalé should be abandoned, and accordingly on the 28th of May, after first destroying its batteries (which comprised sixty guns and six mortars), he withdrew all his troops from the place.

Desire to
attack
Anapa.

But Anapa at this time was still holding out; and upon the reduction of this latter and much greater fortress the desire of the Allies became concentrated.

This for-
bidden by
Louis
Napoleon.

All at once, under order from Paris, the attack upon Anapa by either French ships or French troops was forbidden in terms the most peremptory that language could furnish.

It may well be supposed that attributing to himself all the powers of a thoroughly absolute sovereign, and sincerely convinced of his skill in the art

of waging war from a distance, the French Emperor had suffered acutely on finding himself set aside in the way we have seen by the stern, unbending Pélissier; and—as though to recover his self-respect, and his sense of being really an Emperor—the bitterly mortified sovereign clutched hard at what seemed an occasion for asserting himself once more as a potentate that even strong men must obey. Having heard of the resolve to make an attack upon Anapa, he ventured to come down on Pélissier with an imperial message, commanding him on no pretext whatever to allow an expedition to Anapa.* Pélissier fiercely met the prohibition by determining that it should not be obeyed; but he varied his plan of resistance. He showed Lord Raglan the draft of a letter from himself to Admiral Bruat in which, after stating the purport of the Emperor's order, he directed the admiral “notwithstanding to pass by Anapa on his return and to take part in the naval bombardment of the place.”**

Pélissier's
determined
resistance
to the pro-
hibition.

The letter, Pélissier said, was afterwards modified, and perhaps he, still later, determined to refrain altogether from sending it;⁽⁷⁾ but at all events Admiral Bruat—unassailed by any real countermand—went on with the planned expedition.

Lord Raglan was angered by this new attempt of the Emperor to interrupt the business of war. “I fear,” wrote the English commander, “that much inconvenience may arise if his Imperial Majesty

Lord Rag-
lan's cen-
sure on the
French
Emperor.

* 3d June: “Sous aucun prétexte ne permettez d'Expédition “à Anapa.” Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, 12th June 1855.

** Ibid.

CHAP. IV. "pursue the system of forbidding operations that
 ————— "may have been determined upon." *

Fall of
Anapa.

The
enemy's
forced
abandon-
ment of the
whole Cir-
cassian
coast.

Troops left
to guard
the Straits;

the rest
brought
back.

While thus running dead counter in action to Louis Napoleon's orders, Pélissier, it seems, was vouchsafing no other kind of reply to his sovereign's imperious mandate; ⁽⁸⁾ but fate meanwhile interposed with the magic touch of a fact. Persuaded that if left to face the approaching armada, its garrison would be simply annihilated, the enemy, under Khoumatoff's orders, withdrew on the 5th of June from the fortress of Anapa, and passed at once over the Kouban, thus abandoning with the last of his strongholds in that cherished part of the empire the whole Circassian coast. ** He left in the place, as I count them, from our admiral's detailed report, 114 pieces of artillery.

Sir George Brown left the 5000 Turks supported by a thousand French troops, as well as by a thousand of English to guard the Straits of Kertch, and with the rest of his forces returned at once to the Chersonese.

IV.

A contrast.

The fortunes of this brief campaign (lasting only about twenty days) were in contrast at more than one point with those of the main undertaking. In the course of their strife for Sebastopol the Allies had won glorious victories; but (after sustaining great losses) had as yet conquered nothing at all except the ground under their feet; whilst by this smoother

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, 12th June (No. 89).

** Ibid.

Kertch expedition they had not tempted the enemy to face them in battle, and of course therefore had not been able to gain any victories, but still they achieved signal conquests. CHAP.
IV.

The easy, untroubled invasion of the Kertchine Peninsula, the seizure of all the ground needed for the object in hand, the coercion that forced the enemy to destroy his whole chain of coast batteries, and burn down vessel by vessel, his war-squadron formed and assembled to guard these precious waters of Kertch, the opening of the famous straits of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, the armed occupation of the Sea of Azof excluding all other flags, the hand of Authority laid on the shores of every province of Russia that bordered on what until then had been a "closed" Russian lake, the enforced withdrawal of Russia from Soudjak-Kalé, from Anapa (the last of the strongholds she owned on the south of the Kouban), her immediate abandonment of the whole of the Circassian coast, the infliction besides on the Czar of such minor forfeitures as that of some 340 pieces of ordnance, of nearly 500 vessels engaged in his great commissariat tasks, and of supplies in enormous quantities all amassed for his army engaged on the Sebastopol theatre of war—these indeed, one may say, were results which, if purchased by battles and victories, might well have seemed more than sufficient to compensate serious losses; and yet the whole string of conquests scarce cost the Allies any sacrifice, did not cost them even one single life. General
results of
the Kertch
expedition.

Nor can any man say that the conquerors attained their end by surprise; for since even so early These not
attained by
surprise;

CHAP.
IV.

a time as the spring of the previous year (1854), the Russians had been actively engaged in endeavouring to secure both their Straits and their Kertchine Peninsula from the much-apprehended attacks; * whilst, so far as concerned the advantage of being newly put on his guard, Baron Wrangel was specially blest; since but three weeks before, he had seen and studied the lineaments of the then approaching Armada not as yet overtaken at sea by Canrobert's words of recall.

nor (in
the main)
by defaults
of Russian
com-
manders.

Nor again can the main of what followed be fairly said to result from the faults or defaults of the Russian commanders. Baron Wrangel was plainly unable to defend the Kertchine Peninsula, and warranted therefore in yielding. Rear-Admiral Wulff on the whole could hardly perhaps do much better than destroy, as he did, his own squadron. General Khoumatoff, when abandoning the Circassian fortresses and the whole Circassian coast, acted under the painful stress of what—perhaps rightly—he judged to be hugely superior force; and, although it may be that, if led with a valour in action proportioned to the valour in words displayed by the officers summoned on the shores of the Sea of Azof, the troops under Prince Lobanoff-Rostoffsky, under General Krasnoff, and under Colonel Kostrukoff might have saved a good deal of their sovereign's property, and subjected the Allies to some loss, they, even so, could not have met the full stress of the naval invasion, or altered at all its main issue.

The phe-
nomenon

Granting this, there stands out a phenomenon

* Todleben, vol. II. pp. 267 *et seq.*

unexplained by assigning "surprise" or error of counsel—one inviting us to say why it was that Russia—a great Military Power—could be quietly stripped of possessions very dear to her—possessions by sea and by land, and this with such masterful ease, that from the first to the last she only wounded three of her assailants and did not kill even one.

CHAP.
IV.(so far)
left unex-
plained.

The simple truth is, that in regions where land and sea much intertwine, an Armada having on board it no more than a few thousand troops, but comprising a powerful fleet, and propelled by steam-power, can use its amphibious strength with a wondrously cogent effect; and—engaged as he was at the time in defending Sebastopol, the troubled Czar, after all, was not a potentate strong enough to withstand such an engine of war.

The true
explan-
ation.

The merit of perceiving this truth, and enforcing it with passionate eagerness, belonged to our Admiral Lyons, and—approved by Admiral Bruat—his measure received from Lord Raglan a warm, never-failing support; but, if we ask who in this business was the conqueror of the greatest obstacles, the palm must go to Pélissier. Concealing under his violence of speech and of manner the gifts that made him well able to shape and maintain a wise policy, he had plainly divined that, whether the English were right or whether wrong in their eagerness for the Kertch Expedition, they could hardly be brought back again into that state of confidence and good-humour which a cordial alliance demands, unless the recall sent by Canrobert at one o'clock in the morning of the 4th of May could be expiated, if so one

Lyons the
originator
and eager
advocate of
the Ex-
pedition.Carrying
with him
Admiral
Bruat and
Lord Rag-
lan.

Pélissier;

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IV.

his propul-
sion of the
measure
against the
will of his
Emperor.

may speak, by renewing without loss of time the joint expedition to Kertch.

Pélissier brought to bear on the object that will of his—always strong—which seemed in him to be steeled by the fierce heat of anger. He had need of his strength; for of late, as we know, the French Emperor had become more than ever an active, rampant opposer of all that the generals on the Chersonese believed to be their best means of effectively conducting the war.

With the letter of the law on his side, though not, of course, its true spirit (for he did not act like a king in full concert with the high State Authorities), this confident Louis Napoleon was still as before insistent on his actual, personal right to be playing the great game of war from St. Cloud or from Paris; whilst Pélissier, believing it plain that surrender to such pretensions would inflict grievous harm upon France, and would even put in dire peril the honour of her arms, was brought perforce under the sway of principles higher and broader than those which in general serve to guide the conduct of officers. Resorting freely to action as a means of thwarting interference, and writing but little to Paris, he firmly maintained his own will against the will of his sovereign, and—without bringing on any rupture—proved able to set him aside.⁽⁹⁾

The severity of the contest which ended in this good result may well have been masked by Pélissier's fierce, scornful way of alluding to any opposers like Niel and the Emperor; but in reality, the struggle was arduous, was full of danger, and must have cost

the strong man anxious moments. This is why I have said that amongst the chiefs, naval and military, who firmly pressed to an issue this Kertch Expedition, Pélissier was the one who conquered the gravest obstacle.

CHAP.
IV.

It was scarce possible that the thorough success of an expedition undertaken against the set will of Louis Napoleon should give him immense, unmixed joy. He, of course, had to say, as he did in six or seven cold words, he was glad the expedition had succeeded, but he hastened in the very same sentence to protest against every such measure.⁽¹⁰⁾

Effect of
the success
on the
mind of
Louis
Napoleon;

The tidings of what had been achieved by the Kertch Expedition produced a great moral effect. They spread joy in the camp of the Allies, where Pélissier and Lord Raglan commanded;* and proportionally afflicted and disheartened the forces defending Sebastopol.**

on the
camps of
the Allies;

on the
Russians.

Those who know where the Czardom is weak, and therefore know where it is tender, will say, I believe, that, if executed with like success some weeks before, when Lyons and Lord Raglan first urged it, this eastward invasion of Russia would have governed the issue of the Vienna negotiations and brought the war to an end.

The stress
it put on
their Czar.

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State: "These gallant exploits of the Navy have spread joy in our camps."—June 5, 1855.

** "Impression défavorable."—Totleben, vol. II. p. 295.

CHAPTER V.

OPENING OF THE THIRD BOMBARDMENT.—VICTORIOUS ASSAULTS OF ALL THE COUNTER-APPROACHES BY FRENCH AND ENGLISH TROOPS.—CONCLUSION OF THE THIRD BOMBARDMENT.

I.

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V.

Resolve of
Pélissier
and Lord
Raglan to
attack the
counter-
ap-
proaches;

their con-
cord.

The shield
this af-
forded
against
Louis Na-
poleon's
interfe-
rence.

THE French and the English commanders had been meanwhile resolving in concert to attack all those counter-approaches that guarded the Karabelnaya. These included not only the White Redoubts and the Kamtchatka Lunette, which had sprung, as it were, out of darkness to challenge and mock at the French in the months of February and March, but also the Work of the Quarries—directly opposed to the English—which had since been thrown up by the enemy in front of his Great Redan.

The concord at this time established between Pélissier and Lord Raglan was not the result of agreement attained by any mere compromise. Each chief thought exactly alike on the questions then ripe for decision, and having worked out his conclusion at a separate time, had also apparently reached it by a separate process of thought. With all its other priceless advantages, the concord thus happily reigning between Pélissier and Lord Raglan was plainly a shield of great strength that well might be used in resistance to any further dictation attempted against them from Paris; and, as though to prepare their agreement for service in that special

way, the two chiefs reduced it to writing by a fitting exchange of letters. CHAP.
V.

Clinging fast to his much-beloved doctrine, General Niel continued to urge that the investment of Sebastopol—in other words, a campaign fought out with success in the Open—should precede any action attempted against the counter-approaches;* but the power—the baneful power—he had wielded in Canrobert's time rested then on the authority of the Emperor, and the Emperor himself, as we know, had by this time proved wholly unable to obstruct the fiery Pélissier. “Knowing nothing of what is going “on”—so Niel wrote to the Minister of War—“I “abstain from all reflection. I asked leave to offer “some observations on the state of the siege, and was “told that it was not the time.” **

Though the deputy of the far-distant monarch was thus almost fiercely repressed, the monarch himself might still try to assert his authority. Undeterred by the series of rebuffs and defeats to which we saw him exposed, the French Emperor ventured once more to try the flat “letter of the law” against his resolute general. On the 5th of June, he allowed himself to assail Pélissier with this message, sent by telegraph:—“For the happiness of France, and for “the glory of our arms, you are at the head of the “finest army that perhaps has ever existed. An

The vain
resistance
of Niel.

The
French
Emperor's
prohibi-
tion.

* Rousset, vol. II. p. 215.

** Ibid., p. 216. Apparently sorry for his rudeness, Pélissier afterwards sent for Niel, and received him with marked kindness, but did not let him give counsel.

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V.

“immortal reputation is assured to you, but you must
“do great things. Indeed the conduct of the siege
“is more a business within the sphere of the com-
“mander of the Engineers than of the Commander-
“in-Chief. Now, the general of Engineers has ad-
“dressed to you these observations: ‘If you choose
“to continue the siege without investing the place
“you will only obtain after bloody and desperate
“struggles, which will cost you the sacrifice of
“your best soldiers, that which would come to
“you of its own accord after the investment.’
“In accord with the English Government, which is
“writing in the same sense to Lord Raglan, I give
“you the positive order to abstain from throwing
“your strength into the business of the siege before
“having invested the place.* So concert measures
“with Lord Raglan and Omar Pasha for taking the
“offensive and operating whether by the Tchernaya
“or against Simphéropol.” **

Persistence
of Pélissier.

Proceeding on the same day towards action of a kind
strictly opposite to the course thus enjoined, Pélissier
thus telegraphed to Paris:—“I am to see Lord Raglan
“to-day (with whom, by the way, I am in perfect
“accord), in order to make the final dispositions for
“the assault which is to put in our power the White
“Redoubts, the Green Mamelon, and the Quarry in
“front of the Great Redan. According to my present
“reckoning, I shall commence this operation on the

* “Je vous donne l’ordre positif de ne point vous acharner
“au siège avant d’avoir investi la place.”—Rousset, vol. II. p. 232.

** Ibid.

“7th, and I shall push it on unrelentingly with the
“utmost vigour.” *

The telegram from Pélissier was despatched, it would seem, at an hour when Louis Napoleon's peremptory orders of the same day had not reached the French camp; and their subsequent arrival elicited a few barren words in reply, but wrought no change at all in the purpose of this fierce, stubborn commander. His barren, evasive words ran:—“When I
“shall be able to do so in concert with our allies, I
“will execute your instructions of the 5th in so far
“as concerns action in the open field, which enters,
“as I have told you, into my own combinations. At
“this moment, cholera, pressing heavily on the
“Sardinian Army, makes it immovable. General
“Alexander la Marmora has succumbed to it.” **

Then, sparing no further moments for hardy evasions like these, Pélissier turned to the measures which he and Lord Raglan had planned.

By compassing that part of the project which aimed at the two White Redoubts and the Kamtchatka Lunette, our allies, after a long and mortifying interval of submission to hostile encroachments, would assert themselves at last as besiegers no longer repressed by the garrison; and one attractive feature in the plan was the proposed attack of “the Quarries”; for

The con-
templated
attack.

* Rousset, vol. II. p. 232.

** Translated from the copy in French handed by Pélissier to Lord Raglan on the 8th of June. The copy is headed:—
“Copie de la réponse faite par le Général Pélissier à la Dépêche
“du Ministre de la Guerre, en date du 5 Juin;” but the letter of the 5th was from the Emperor personally.

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V.

in that field of action, though separated by an interposing ravine, the English, at no great distance, would be fighting on the left of the French.

II.

Resources
and pre-
paratives
of the
garrison.

The Allies of course meant that the intended assaults should be preceded by a bombardment, and it therefore may be right to say that their siege batteries at this time counted 588 guns, whilst the guns of the Russians were in number 1174, of which 571 were of great calibre.

Resistance
to Tod-
leben;

its conse-
quence.

Besides the troops assigned to the coast batteries, the Russian garrison now comprised 57 battalions, 22 of which guarded the Faubourg; but dissension at this time was troubling the Russian defence, so that, contrary to the insistence and solemn warning of Todleben, the works destined to be attacked were left in an under-manned state. For the defence of the two White Redoubts the Selinghinsk and the Volhynia, as well as of the five-gun Zabalkansky battery which had been constructed in their rear, there were only assigned six weak battalions, and five of these during the daytime were kept in somewhat distant reserve (one in and near the Troitsky Ravine, and four in the Ouchakoff gorge), so that, to occupy the two White Redoubts, there remained only one battalion, 450 strong, which, accordingly, furnished them garrisons of no more than 225 men each. Ten battalions—one forming its garrison, the other nine held in reserve—were assigned for the defence of the Kamtchatka Lunette, and six for the defence of the Quarries.

From the 31st of May until a late hour on the 7th of June, General Jabrokritski commanded the troops in the Faubourg, and to him, in conjunction with General Timovieff (who had advised a like reduction), there specially fell the blame of leaving the defence of the works to insufficient forces; though of course the discredit of not repressing the pretensions of generals who presumed to be hampering the measures of the great engineer, would rest with the Commander-in-Chief—with General Michael Gortchakoff.

On the 7th of June, at an hour when assault was impending, Jabrokritski gave up the command, and was succeeded by General Khrouleff. Khrouleff thereupon gave orders for reinforcing the garrisons of all the counter-approaches with the utmost despatch, but he was baffled by the stress of events then almost immediately following, and it resulted that not only on the 6th, but also down to the evening of the 7th of June, the strength and disposition of the garrisons continued to be such as we have seen.

III.

In the afternoon of the 6th, at about three o'clock, the siege batteries of the Allies opened fire against most, if not all, of the works which defended the Karabel Faubourg. Well answered at first by the garrison, this third and most powerful of all the yet delivered bombardments was unrelentingly pressed until the day closed.

Bombard-
ment of
the 6th of
June.

When Pélissier not long before night-time had

Pélissier
warmly

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V.
greeted by
the English
troops.

Signifi-
cance of
their
cheers.

left the Victoria Ridge, and was riding back towards his headquarters, he encountered a happy surprise. Our soldiery knew, although vaguely, that after acceding to the command of the French army, its new Chief refusing to shrink from even terrible sacrifices had peremptorily met the encroachments attempted from Western Sebastopol by hard, victorious fighting, that he had placed himself in full concert with the English commander, taking part in that Kertch expedition which had brought mighty joy to the camp, that he and the English Commander had already begun a new enterprise, that so early as even the morrow his troops and those of Lord Raglan would storm all the counter-approaches then left to affront the besiegers; and, if our soldiers divined that any French marplot was trying to resist, or to thwart the new Chief, their feeling towards him of course gathered all the more heart. Riding westward across Cathcart's Hill in the evening of that 6th of June, Péliissier found himself greeted by the roar of true English hurrahs that sprang from the Light Division, and was taken up camp after camp by all our troops on the Chersonese. Péliissier was deeply impressed. Tears came to the eyes of the seemingly hard, iron Chief; but—true commander—he looked to the firm, warlike purpose implied by this heart-stirring welcome. He seized it as an omen of victory.*

The bom-
bardment
continued
at night.

Although only with vertical fire (from the time when darkness set in) a bombardment went on through the night.

* Letters from Headquarters, vol. II. p. 294.

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V.

Next morning, the 7th of June, the siege-guns reopening continued their work of destruction; and, whilst still, as before, expending the main of their strength on the Faubourg, they now too (by way of diversion) assailed the Flagstaff Bastion.

Bombard-
ment of
the 7th of
June.

On even the first day, the 6th, the batteries of the Allies obtained a decisive ascendant; but from the morning of the following day, the 7th, they hour by hour asserted their more and more thorough mastery over all the antagonist batteries. The fire of the allied batteries was so destructive that even General Todleben was fain to break away in describing it from the colder language of science, and to treat the bombardment as an abnormal exertion of force—as violent, terrible, murderous. More terrific, it seems, than all else was the fire of the English.* They delivered their artillery blows somewhat slowly, one after another, but with a dreadful exactness, entailing havoc and ruin.⁽¹⁾ After three o'clock in the afternoon, the whole fire of the Allies—then no longer assailing the Flagstaff Bastion—was brought to bear on the Faubourg with appalling effect. By six o'clock in the evening, not only the two White Redoubts on Mount Inkerman with the battery called “Zabalkansky” then newly thrown up in their rear, but also the Kamtchatka Lunette that crowned the Mamelon Height, and all the neighbouring works (including even the Malakoff) that might otherwise have given support to the foremost line of defence, were ruined or grievously crippled. Though

Effect of
the bom-
bardment.

The fire of
the English
guns.

Crippled
state of
the ene-
my's works
concerned
in opposing
the French.

* Todleben, vol. II. p. 310.

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V.

not for the most part dismounted, the guns in the enemy's batteries were, so to speak, "buried alive"—covered over with heaps upon heaps of what had been merlons, or traverses, or revetments of lined embrasures.*

In its bearing on all the assaults then about to be made by the French, the bombardment proved itself so effective that their onsets, however exposed to peril of other kinds, could hardly be defeated or checked by any artillery power.

The less injured state of those opposing the English.

Whilst thus smoothing, so far as was possible, the rough path of conquest, the English did more for the French than they found they could do for themselves. They of course poured the fire of their siege-guns on the work of "the Quarries"—the work they meant to assault—and they wrought a good deal of havoc on the nearest supporting work, that is, the Great Redan;** but they could not so cripple the numerous and powerful batteries in this part of the Karabelnaya as to prevent the enemy's gunners from disputing any hold they might take of the Work they were minded to seize.

The time for the bayonet come.

All, however, agreed that the cannon had now done its work, and that what must come next was—the bayonet.

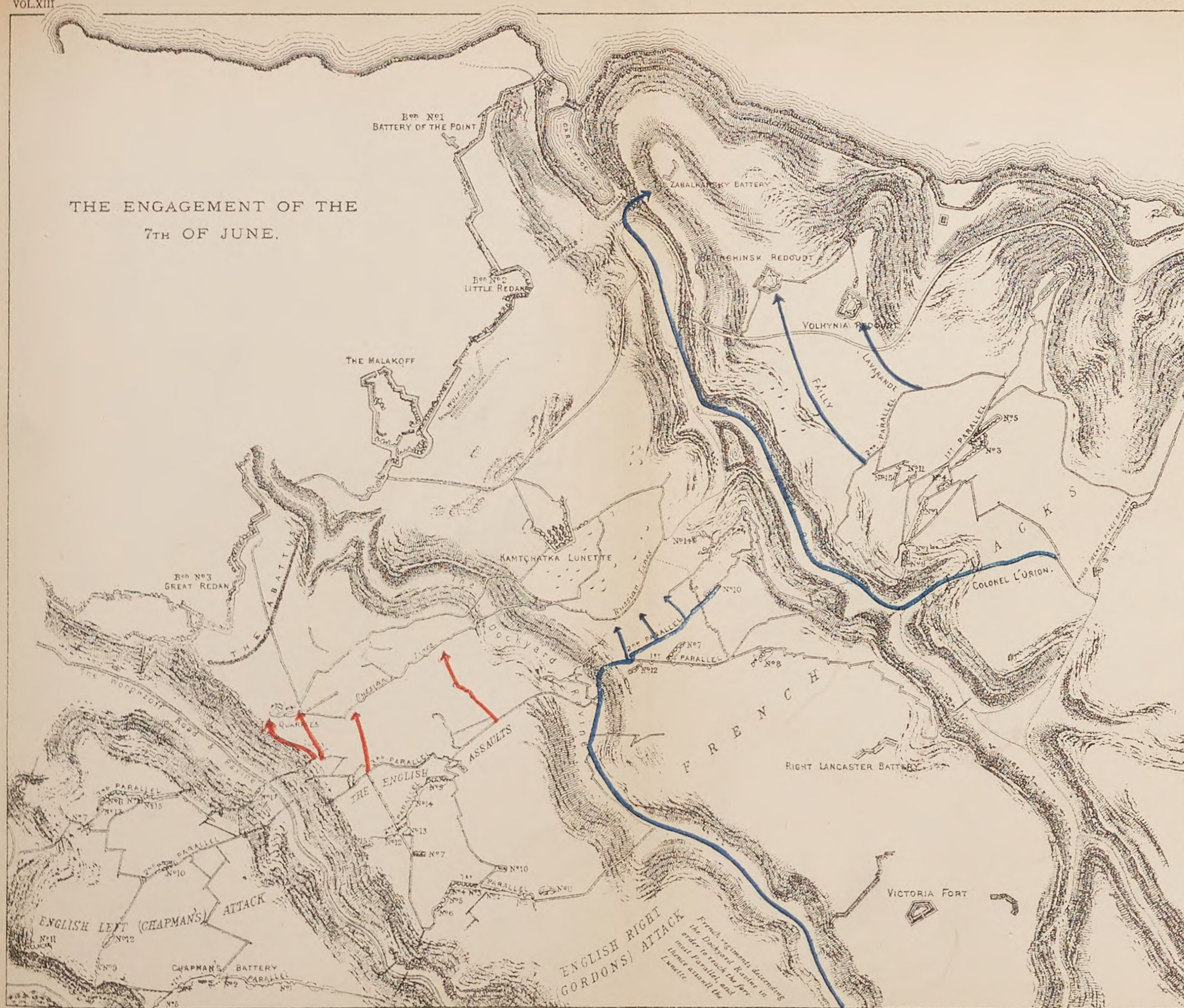
IV.

Plan and preparatives for the assault.

Pélissier and Lord Raglan determined to assault at almost the same time the whole of the counter-approaches which still in the Karabelnaya affronted the now strong besiegers. The attack on the part of

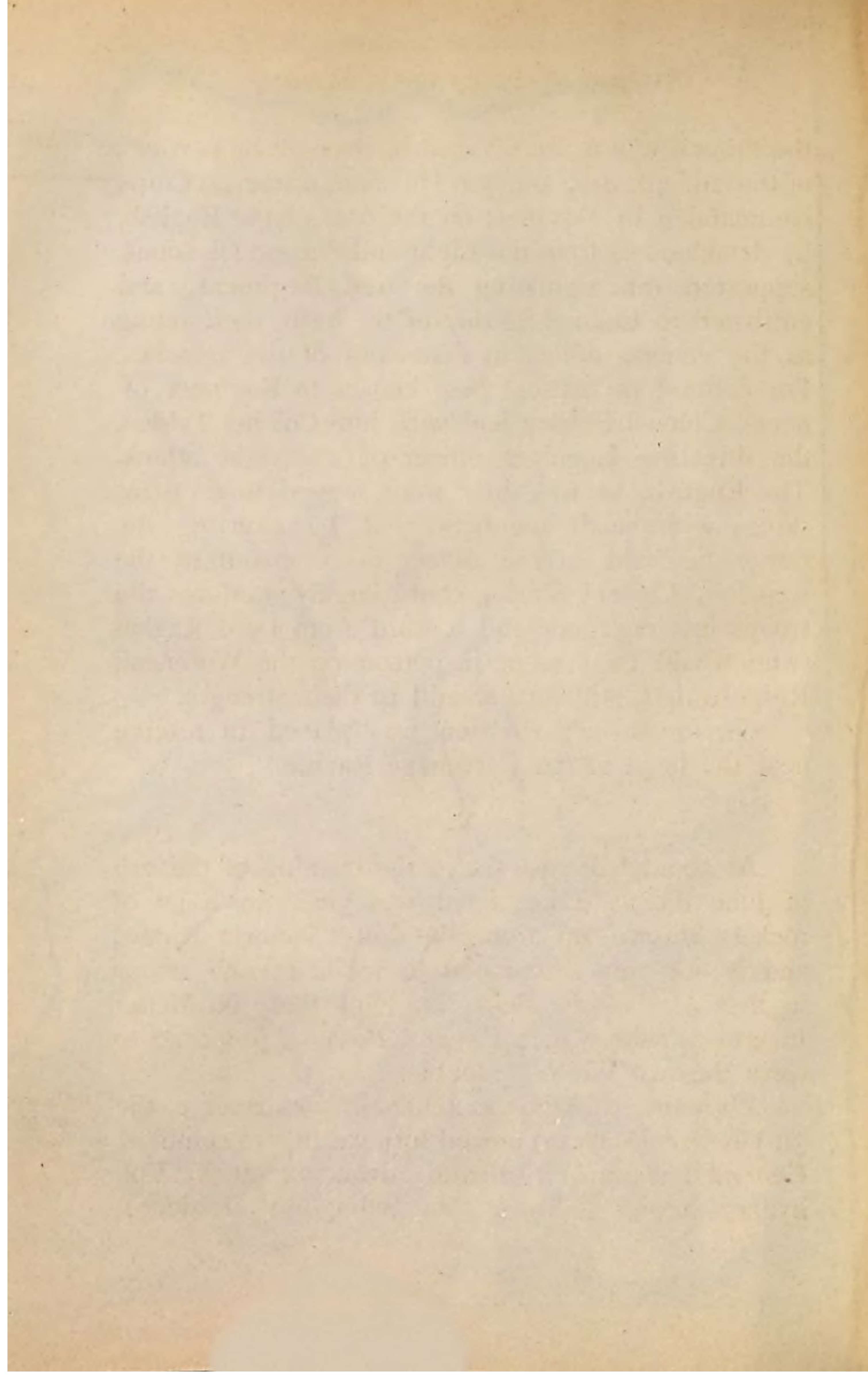
* Todleben, vol. II. pp. 314, 315. ** Ibid., p. 315.

THE ENGAGEMENT OF THE 7TH OF JUNE.



Scale

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100



the French was to be effected in strength by portions of the 2d, 3d, 4th, and 5th Divisions of the 2d Corps commanded by Bosquet; on the part of the English, by detachments from the Light and Second Divisions, supported (at night) by the 62d Regiment, and entrusted to Colonel Shirley of the 88th, then acting as the general officer in command of the trenches. For counsel in matters best known to Engineer officers, Colonel Shirley had with him Colonel Tylden, the directing Engineer officer of the right attack. The English, as was their wont, hoped to do great things with small numbers; but by exerting the power he held as the officer in command of the trenches, Colonel Shirley could largely reinforce the troops first engaged, and a word from Lord Raglan (who would be present in person on the Woronzoff Ridge) might still further add to their strength.

Osman Pasha's division was placed in reserve near the head of the Careenage Ravine.

V.

At about half-past six in the evening of the 7th of June the welcome signal was given by a jet of rockets thrown up from the lofty Victoria Ridge; and it not only summoned to action French troops in that part of the field, but also those on Mount Inkerman, with which General Bosquet proposed to carry the two White Redoubts.

With the 4th Division (Dulac) as its reserve, the 3d Division (Mayran) moved forward in two columns; General Lavarande's brigade advancing on the Volhynia, that of Failly on the Selinghinsk Redoubt; Attack and seizure of the two White Redoubts,

CHAP.
V.

and, although the assailants of the Volhynia Redoubt had to cross a breadth of some 330 yards, whilst those attacking the Selinghinsk were to traverse even double that space, both the forces pushed steadily on under fire without coming once to a halt before reaching each its set goal. To accomplish this advance—and it did not cost them any great sacrifice—was almost to ensure final victory; for thenceforth the weight of numbers—two whole French brigades to two bodies of but 225 men each—could scarce fail to govern the issue. The resistance of the two little garrisons might be hopeless, but still was brave. Chestakoff, the commander of the Redoubts, and Bélaieff, commanding the battalion, were both of them killed. After a struggle in each of the works, which, although not greatly prolonged, was still hot so long as it lasted, the Redoubts were both of them taken, the Volhynia by General Lavarande's, the Selinghinsk by Failly's brigade.

A second battalion of the Moroum regiment came up with a mind to support the vanquished and retreating garrisons; but yielding to weight of numbers, the men of this last force were soon in a state of discomfiture, and sharing in the fate of their comrades. Pursuing their vanquished enemy, the French pressed on over a distance of some 500 yards, and seized the Zabalkansky battery; but not choosing to hold as their own a work so far out in advance, they destroyed its embrasures, and spiked the five guns it contained.*

Seizure
and abandon-
ment
of the Za-
balkansky
battery.

The Rus-

When about half an hour had passed, two other

* In that state Todleben found it, vol. II. p. 330.

CHAP.
V.

battalions of the Moroum regiment which had been in reserve all this while marched out of the Ouchakoff Ravine with a mind to retake the Redoubts; but long since, General Bosquet had seen that any movements of troops going on, whether eastward or westward, between the Faubourg and the White Redoubts might give him a good opportunity of striking them in flank or in rear. Therefore under his orders Lieutenant-Colonel Larrouy d'Orion with two French battalions had moved down along the deep bed of the Careenage Ravine till he came to the viaduct, and had then clambered up the right bank of the gorge to a lair from which he might strike at the front, the flank, or the rear of any Russian troops moving to or from the Redoubts in either advance or retreat.

sians
throwing
forward
two bat-
talions of
their Mo-
roum regi-
ment.

Movement
by Colonel
d'Orion
under
Bosquet's
orders.

The two ill-fated Russian battalions had already passed over the viaduct, and were ascending the path up Mount Inkerman which led towards their goal, when all at once Colonel d'Orion with his agile French force sprang up the hillside in their rear, seemed intent to cut them off from Sebastopol, and threw them into confusion. They turned, and strove to get back the way they had come, and their movement to the rear was afterwards represented to Todleben as "opening a way with the bayonet." Of what fighting really took place we see indeed one painful trace—for the brave Colonel d'Orion received a mortal wound; but, so far as concerned nearly half, or more strictly four-tenths of the enemy's force, there resulted nothing short of surrender. Four hundred of the Russians, including twenty officers,

His over-
throw of
the two
Moroum
battalions

400 Rus-
sians sur-
render-
ing.

CHAP.
V.

were content to be taken prisoners by Colonel d'Orion's force.*

French
soldiery far
out in front.

When the French, as we saw, had determined that the Zabalkansky battery was too distant to be of service to them, and had therefore done their best to destroy it, they were far from intending that their outposts should be kept back in rear of the work they had thus discarded as useless, and took good care, on the contrary, to spread their patrols over ground several hundreds of yards more advanced—ground by which they well knew that the enemy might approach them from the Karabelnaya; whilst also, as was natural, volunteer explorers and idlers moved rambling over the ground newly opened on that summer evening to the eyes of the victors.

Fruitless
advances
of Russian
troops;

their re-
ported
achieve-
ments.

The people thus scattered were, at one point, pressed back by Colonel Prince Ouroussoff with a single battalion;** at another by Colonel Kraievsky, despatched under Khrouleff's directions with no less than 800 men. In the course of the movement he made against troops thus receding before him, Prince Ouroussoff entered the site of the discarded battery (which the French had taken, spoilt, and abandoned three hours before), and on that simple action built up—built up, I believe, in good faith—a theory that he with his men had victoriously “retaken” the work. Though he added that he had retaken it with our old friend “the bayonet,” one is not there-

* Niel, p. 296. By Todleben (who wrote long afterwards) the statement is not called in question.

** General Timovieff (on what ground I know not) accompanied Ouroussoff's battalion, and was killed.

fore forced to infer that he meant to deceive human beings, but rather—Slave like—to put a kind of “Hurrah” in the midst of what reads like a statement. Prince Ouroussoff had even what seemed like a “trophy” of the miniature sort; for the French in their chase had been using a baby-sized howitzer of the kind drawn by human strength; and when the pursuit had ceased, this “perambulator,” as our nursemaids would call it, was left without “hands” strong enough to withdraw it from the spot where it stood—the spot on which, it would seem, Prince Ouroussoff’s soldiery found it.*

With plain signs of smiling incontinently at Ouroussoff’s other mistakes, General Todleben nevertheless accepted the Prince’s bold story;⁽²⁾ and was certainly led to represent that both Ouroussoff and Kraievsky had triumphantly engaged their small forces in not less than two brilliant combats. The theory drew much support from statements which showed that these Colonels had purchased their triumphs by enormous sacrifices of men;** but the French, it appears, never knew of their having sustained the reverses implied by such Russian victories, or at all events did not confess that they had encountered any such checks; and on the whole, my conclusion is that, although both Prince Ouroussoff and Kraievsky (the last under Khrouleff’s orders) did really advance up the spur, and press back all the loose soldiery that came in their way, they encoun-

* See Rousset, vol. II. p. 235.

** The Prince losing *one-half* of his force, and Kraievsky 187 out of 800. Todleben, pp. 322 and 327.

CHAP.
V.

tered no formed battalion, and engaged in no serious fight, their losses being caused by the error of "trespassing," if so one may speak, on what had become a French realm, without any due warlike motive. The deserts of the Prince and of Khrouleff (the ordainer of Kraievsky's advance) were not unlike those of an officer who has wasted good troops in the pastime of molesting an enemy's piquets.

Rejoicing in what he believed to have been his triumphant recapture of the Zabalkansky battery, and there, contentedly tarrying, whilst also perhaps somewhat flushed by his seizure of the small French "perambulator," Prince Ouroussoff harboured a fancy strong enough to make him feel sure that he then had "no more worlds to conquer." He not only fancied, but even — twice over — reported that the two White Redoubts — then observed to be doggedly silent — had passed back into the hands of his own fellow-countrymen, and he even brought General Khrouleff to accept the same pleasant belief; but under Todleben's orders the valiant sea-captain Skariatine* dispelled it in a very plain way by moving up with some men to the verge of the Selinghinsk Redoubt, and approaching the work so closely — of course the darkness was favouring — as to be able to catch the voices of soldiers talking within it, and hear that they were talking in French.

Both this and the Volhynia Redoubt were secure in the hands of their conquerors; but the site of the Zabalkansky battery remained in the hands of the Russians till a day or two afterwards, when, as the

* Respecting Skariatine, see Note in the Appendix.(3)

French had done before them, they spontaneously CHAP.
V.
relinquished what Ouroussoff had thought to be a great prize.

It was after his capture of the Volhynia Redoubt, and indeed on the following day that—stricken unhappily by a merely chance shot—the brave General Lavarande fell.

VI.

Far away from the two White Redoubts, but still in a sense closely joined with them by relations of interdependence, that work audaciously planted on “the Mamelon” with which the genius of Todleben had long been shielding his Malakoff was now at last brought under challenge. Not to take the Kamtchatka Lunette by even so mighty an effort as Pélissier was determined to make, would be a disheartening calamity; but to win it might be winning a stepping-stone to the paramount stronghold, and—after a while—to Sebastopol. Few, if any, believed that the Work could be seized and held fast without incurring grave losses.

At half-past five o'clock in the evening, General Bosquet, on ground near the Lancaster Battery, which he had chosen as his post of observation, assembled the Divisions of Camou and Brunet—the troops destined to attack the Lunette—and haranguing them regiment by regiment was answered by the cheers of the men. In order to reach the last covert from which they would make their spring, they were first to advance some way down by the bed of the

First seizure of the Kamtchatka Lunette by the French.

5.30 P.M.
The French troops harangued by Bosquet.

CHAP.
V.

— Dockyard Ravine, next file up its right bank, and proceed to line the Third Parallel—the foremost entrenchment then stretching across the Victoria Ridge. There ensconced, they would have but to wait till unleashed by the promised signal, and then at once storm the Lunette.

Their advance, in a state of warlike effervescence.

After hearing General Bosquet's harangues the French troops advanced, and began to move down the Ravine in a state of most brisk effervescence, and a temper so eagerly warlike that to the eyes of a staid English critic their march seemed almost tumultuous.*

The Vivandière.

The more any regiment was agitated by perturbing emotions, the more its men seemed to contrast with the fair one who rode at their head in her panoply of fearless, calm pride.

To our people—descended of men who never had learnt to revere the beauteous goddess of Reason—this time-honoured scene of a drama in which the Vivandière acts was beyond measure strange; but to one who—first having been reared in the genuine French School of High Art—beholds her riding serenely at the head of her regiment in the moments preceding a fight she represents an Idea; and, it being divined, though but dimly, that this march against the Lunette would involve heavy slaughter, she now more than ever seemed one who embodied the spirit of war. You might call her a priestess ordained, and bringing up human sacrifices to lay

* Hamley, p. 239.

on the altar of glory; or again might see in her form a conventional image of France nobly leading her sons into action, and commanding them, if need be, to die. Each actress had her own "reading" of the part that she played; so that one corps of troops for example was proudly led down through the gorge by a chieftainess riding in plumes; another by a bright girl attired with all the ineffable comeliness that belongs to the daughters of France when obeying strict laws of costume. The fairest of all was the one at the head of a much-favoured regiment, by our people called the "Green Chasseurs."* With infinite grace and composure she led her men down the Ravine to meet the fortune of war.

We have—not wrongly—lingered a moment to see the Vivandière pass; for—always characteristic, and linked with great warlike traditions—the memory of her presence, that day, gathered strength from the slaughter that followed. After an interval of perhaps hardly more than thirty or thirty-five minutes, the fight was destined to open, and then within one single hour, and within but a few hundred yards of the scenic display we have witnessed, the troops thus led down the Ravine would be falling, and falling by thousands.**

The chosen assailants of the Lunette had been not many minutes ensconced in the Third Parallel when at half-past seven o'clock the rocket-signal unleashed them, and with a vigour and evident in-

The Lunette attacked by the French;

* Apparently the "Tirailleurs."

** As to the extent of the losses sustained by the French in that hour, see *post*, footnote, p. 251.

CHAP.
V.

tentness of purpose observed and admired by Lord Raglan they sprang at once out to the front.

To reach the Kamtchatka Lunette, General Wimpfen's brigade would have to traverse a space of some 500 yards; but the formation of the ground made it possible by choosing right paths to compass most of the distance without incurring strong fire.

The fast advancing brigade swept easily over the rifle-pits with which the great Engineer had striven to screen his Lunette, and pushed on in three columns. The one on the right was a regiment of Algerine Tirailleurs under Colonel Rose, the one in the centre was the 50th Line Regiment commanded by Colonel de Brancion, the one on the left was the 3d Zouave Regiment commanded by Colonel Polhès.

Their first
capture of
the Work;

The Tirailleurs stormed and carried at once two of the collateral batteries on the (proper) left flank of the Lunette; and the other two columns advanced against the Lunette itself. When emerging from the shelter afforded by a dip in the ground, these troops gained the top of the steep leading up to the Work, they at once became fully exposed to grape-shot and musketry-fire, and at the same time began to learn something of the strength of the Lunette. The Ditch they had reached was one cut in the solid rock, was broad, was deep, with beyond it a bristling parapet. The French, however, undaunted by all the perils before them, descended the counterscarp, and some of them moved round by the Ditch to make their way into the Work by its gorge, whilst others by taking advantage of small breaches found

in the parapet, and, in some cases, by standing up on the shoulders of their comrades, found means to enter the work by its embrasures. Colonel de Brancion was presently seen to be planting the colours of his regiment on the parapet of the assaulted Work. CHAP.
V.

Too soon, the brave colonel was struck dead; but, the sight of the victorious standard not failing to draw on the men still outside of the parapet, and the enemy's resistance collapsing under this bold attack, the Lunette was taken and occupied by the victorious French.

Carried wildly away by their victory and the heat of pursuit, no small part of the French troops pushed valiantly on up the glacis of the towering Malakoff, and some of them reaching the Work moved boldly down into its Ditch; but their effort not having formed part of the general design was left unsupported; and unable to climb their way back by the very steep counterscarp, these brave men became prisoners of war. Their impetuous advance on the Malakoff;

The spontaneous attack, as it chanced, took place at a moment when several fresh Russian battalions (held back until then in reserve) had newly entered the Work. These gathering together and led by General Khrouleff himself fell in strength on all those of the assailants who had not yet entered the Work, and drove them back into the gorge of the then newly captured Lunette. But this was not all; for those who were flying carried with them so great a disorder—augmented a few moments afterwards their retreat when attacked in strength by General Khrouleff.

CHAP.
V.Khrouleff's
recapture
of the
Kamtchat-
ka Lunette.

by the explosion of a "fougasse"—that although, it seems, bravely attempted, no lastingly effectual stand could be made within the precincts of the Lunette, and after a brief, yet sharp struggle, the enemy still pressing forward drove all the French out of the Work they so lately had taken, and pressed them far in pursuit. These reverses brought with them a terrible slaughter of the French troops.*

Thus for once, although transient, there shone one bright gleam of success on a movement adventured by Khrouleff, and to him this was much; for, with all his ardour in war, he had not hitherto proved to be a fortunate general. He seems to have become highly excited. Believing perhaps that the French would patiently endure this recapture, he at once rode off to the east with a mind it would seem to complete his apparent victory by recovering the two White Redoubts.

General
Bosquet's
measures.

But whatever Khrouleff might hope, General Bosquet did not harbour a thought of submitting to this reverse. He proved equal to this new occasion. First ordering some batteries to play on the swiftly recaptured Lunette, he prepared to attack it with no less than two brigades of infantry, keeping also another brigade in occupation of the foremost parallel, or the trenches adjacent. For a while, the artillery raged; then all at once ceased, and the two brigades of Camou's Division advanced swiftly on the Lunette, surrounded it on all sides, attacked it with ardour, and rapidly carried the Work. This reconquest took

Second
and defini-

* See footnote *post*, p. 251.

place at half-past seven o'clock, and therefore at a convenient time, since the darkness before long approaching would enable the French engineers to fasten on the captured Lunette, and turn it against the garrison.

CHAP.
V.

tive cap-
ture of the
Lunette by
the French.

At this time Vice-Admiral Nachimoff and General Todleben were both in the midst of the ruins which cumbered, which almost had silenced the cardinal Fort of Sebastopol; and their counsels must needs have been anxious; for he who better than all men could judge such a question has said that the Malakoff for some time that evening was not only at the mercy of the French, but might even have been taken with ease.*

The Mala-
koff judged
by Tod-
leben to be
in immi-
nent
danger.

I have no separate statement before me of the losses sustained by the French in this part of the field, but we know that they must have been huge.**

VII.

The English attack was to open as soon as the French, towards their right, should carry the Work on the Mamelon. So, when from the Woronzoff Ridge Lord Raglan — warmly admiring — saw Bosquet's troops make their first onset, and seize the Kam-

* Todleben, vol. II. pp. 323, 324.

** Because those who fell elsewhere were certainly few; so that, to get at the number of those who fell in the strife connected with the enterprise against the Lunette no more than a small deduction can be made from the number—5543—which represents the French "casualties."

CHAP.
V.

tchatka Lunette, he at once let our people begin their intended assault of "the Quarries."

"The
Quarries."

Since the night of the 19th of April, when Egerton captured the "lodgment" confronting the left of "Gordon's Attack," and bequeathed his honoured name to the conquest thenceforth called "Egerton's Pit," the enemy had enlarged and connected the other neighbouring "lodgments" which still remained in his hands, and from that beginning at last had completed a system of field-work which covered the Great Redan by an outer belt of defences some 400 yards in advance. These field-works, or "counter-approaches," as General Todleben called them, stretched across the whole Woronzoff Ridge in two-fold lines of entrenchment; but the part of them destined to furnish the principal subject of strife was their main work thrown up on the crest of a small rounded ledge which faced down towards Egerton's Pit. By our people this principal Work was always named after some hollows which scarred the ground in its rear; so that when a man spoke of "the Quarries," he did not in general mean the old excavations of stone, but the field-work which covered their front.

The
enemy's
measures
of defence.

For the defence of this principal field-work, and the collateral entrenchments extending it across the Woronzoff Ridge, the enemy, at first, it would seem, assigned only six battalions; but from time to time, later on, as will be presently shown, he threw into the Work other bodies of chosen infantry, and on the whole one may say that, besides the original garrison, he engaged first and last in the conflict

four distinct expeditions of infantry, with an aggregate of strength not disclosed, though clearly shown to be large. He laid in the ground where he judged that our soldiers might tread a number of boxes, charged each with 35 lb. of gunpowder. These were furnished with the needed appliances for making them explode under pressure; and—mainly because in mere structure they differed from the well-known “fougasse”—men spoke of their use as a novelty malicious rather than warlike, and called them “infernal machines.”

The attack was to be delivered by detachments from our Light and 2d Divisions, supported after a while by the 62d Regiment; and as “General in the trenches,” Colonel Shirley commanded them. The duty of guiding our troops rested with the Engineers, and specially with Colonel Tylden, their chief.

If occasion should offer, Colonel Shirley (as General in the trenches) was to act with alertness, with vigour on his extreme right, and to give the French troops all such aid as the strength of his own would allow.*

One great and exclusive advantage was destined to favour the enemy. The conditions were about to be such that (lest they might harm our own troops) the batteries of the English would presently have to abstain from delivering any fire on “the Quarries”; yet the enemy otherwise circumstanced would remain free to use in the conflict his great

The great and exclusive advantage about to be enjoyed by the enemy.

* Journal Royal Engineers, vol. II. pp. 269, 270.

CHAP.
V.

artillery power; and this so extensively that, except only during brief intervals (whilst attempting to hold, or to retake the disputed Work with his infantry), he was destined to keep, and exert this terrible privilege throughout the approaching fight—a period of nearly ten hours.

Lord Raglan's dispositions for the attack.

Lord Raglan confiding in the quality of his troops, and anxious to avoid the losses that might be expected to follow from the use of gross numbers, determined to assault the main field-work with two separated bodies of only 200 men each, sending 300 more to attack the collateral entrenchments; but the troops thus thrown forward were to be supported by 600 more, and to be rapidly followed by very strong working-parties, some destined from almost the first (as was the case, for instance, with the working-party of the 55th Regiment, 160 strong) to act as combatants, and besides, after nightfall to be aided by the 62d Regiment, as also, if the need should occur, by other troops within reach.

Colonel Robert Campbell of the 90th Regiment commanded the stormers, and led in person that half of them (200 strong) which was furnished by the Light Division; whilst the other half, furnished by the 2d Division, was led by Major James Armstrong of the 49th.

Lord Raglan determined that the assault should be delivered exclusively against the flanks of the Work which our people had surnamed “the Quarries”; and this decision proved fortunate; for in the quarters thus marked for attack, the ground

had not, as elsewhere, been charged with any explosive machines.

CHAP.
V.

Our artillery had been searching the Work of "the Quarries" with a powerful fire; but all at once became silent. Then the two chosen bodies of stormers, led, on one flank, by their commander Colonel Campbell of the 90th in person, on the other, by Major Armstrong of the 49th, advanced on the enemy's trenches without, it seems, firing a shot, and—unchecked by Ditch, or by parapet, or by what General Todleben says was the strenuous resistance of the Russian soldiery—pushed forward so resolutely that in spite of their scanty numbers they swiftly broke into the Work. They thus gave the warrant of successful experience to that wise reliance on the quality of his soldiers which had induced Lord Raglan to avoid, if he could, heavy loss by delivering the intended attack with only a few valiant men. These, however, were quickly supported by the troops assigned for the purpose, and by the strong working-party of the 55th Regiment under Captain Cure, which having been previously ordered to throw down their tools and stand to their arms, drove the enemy at the point of the bayonet from the trench they attacked. The conquest quickly embraced not only the Work of the Quarries, but the foremost of the collateral entrenchments, thence extending far eastward across the whole Woronzoff Ridge. High praise was awarded to Captain Elton for the skilful, resolute way in which, with some 55th men, he fended off the enemy's troops from

Advance of
our storm-
ing parties.

Their seiz-
ure of the
Work.

Capture of
the col-
lateral en-
trench-
ments.

CHAP.
V.

some of our people then labouring to reverse a captured parapet.*

Colonel Campbell, at the head of his men, was wounded—twice wounded—without being therefore disabled; but of the forces he led, no great proportion were stricken whilst busied in storming the Work. There were several of them who fell, but fell at a later moment. Major Armstrong for instance, the chief who had led the storming forces contributed by the 2d Division, was severely wounded; but, when the ball reached him, he—acting on one flank, and Campbell besides on the other—had already made good their attack.

Flight of
the defen-
ders, pur-
sued by our
troops.

Overthrown at their foremost entrenchments the Russians were soon driven out from every part of the field-work, and they fled back into the fortress with a loss of two officers and a hundred men.

Our men in
the ex-
treme
front.

Pursuing the fugitives eagerly, our few soldiers pressed their way forward to spots where the ground offered something like shelter against the guns of the Fortress, and thence searched the embrasures of the Great Redan in their front with a keenly sustained rifle-fire.

The tasks
yet await-
ing our
people.

Far from proving to be a sheer blessing, the defeat of the enemy's troops laid open the counter-approach to a fire of great guns more destructive than the efforts of Russian infantry; and on the whole it was plain that, although for the moment victorious, heavy tasks yet awaited our people; for,

* The high honour of the Victoria Cross was granted to Captain, now Colonel F. Elton.

if striving by work carried on under the fire of great batteries to effect—to effect before morning—a fairly tenable lodgment on the ground that their stormers had won, and to connect it with their system of trenches, they also would have, if they could, to withstand all such efforts to recover his counter-approach as the enemy might make in the night-time.

Though disabled in body—not mind—by his dangerous wound, Major Armstrong was so good a soldier as to be carefully thinking already of this last imperious exigency. His men wanting to carry him to the rear, he forbade them, saying firmly:—“No, no; lay me down at the bottom of the Ditch; “for we can’t spare a man till we know whether the enemy will attempt a recapture.”⁽⁴⁾

Notwithstanding his wounds received in storming the Work, Colonel Campbell accepted and throughout retained supreme command in the Quarries, not only of the original attacking force and supports, but of all the reinforcements brought up in the course of the night.

The commander of the working-party of the 49th Regiment, which the 2d Divison had furnished, was Colonel Thornton Grant, whom we have known, if so one may speak, since the morning of the Inkerman day. Whilst overlooking his men, Grant found himself at the side of Colonel Tylden, the gifted Engineer officer whom again and again we have seen where the fighting was thickest. Even he, even Tylden himself was for one instant doubting whether under the fire—the murderous fire—of artillery which

CHAP.
V.

Major
Arm-
strong.

Colonel
Campbell's
command.

Colonel
Grant's
meeting
with Colo-
nel Tylden,

CHAP.
V.

now swept the site of the projected constructions, it would be possible for mortal men to execute the task ordained; but convincing himself the next moment that, unless a communication and lodgment could be made good before morning, the victory achieved by our stormers would prove to be all in vain, he resolved that at even a sacrifice so great as to seem appalling, the needed work must be done. What he followed—unknowingly—was the logic of him who once said: "It is necessary to sail: it is not necessary to live." Grant warmly concurring, and trustful in the valour of his 49th men, undertook to propel the execution of the work which was to connect the newly won ground with our system of trenches at the point called "Egerton's Pit."

The great strain put on the powers of those who remained.

Of the men brought up as "working-parties," so large a proportion were summoned to act as combatants in the fights one after another, of which we shall presently hear, that, to execute the needed works with only the few "hands" remaining, was a formidable task.* There however were happily present some officers of great zeal and energy who might be trusted to go to the utmost of what mortal men could do. In darkness more or less thick, they toiled through the night, and on the whole under conditions which (except as regarded some few) made it hard for a chief in authority, however painstaking and anxious, to award them the praise they deserved. Yet without overpassing the limits of even

* It is said that after deducting the numbers thus summoned to throw down their tools and stand to their arms, there remained only 250 for the needed work.

official recognition, we see the names of six officers CHAP.
V.
 whose valorous exertions were soon brought to light
 —the name first and foremost of Colonel Tylden, Colonel
Tylden.
 the commanding Engineer, the names of Colonel
 Thornton Grant, of Captain Browne, of Lieutenant Thornton
Grant.
 Elphinstone, of Lieutenant Anderson of the 96th. Elphin-
stone.

The sixth name was that of a young officer of the 90th Regiment, whom a casual observer would call a strangely bright-looking boy. Now, however—with pickaxe in hand—this boy (as he seemed) was devoting a mighty zeal—zeal governed by knowledge and skill—to the cardinal purpose in hand. He was one who (as now the world knows) had a life of warlike glory before him. Though seeming much younger, he was really twenty-one years of age. Twenty-one years of age, yet already distinguished for the number and the brilliancy of his warlike services, Captain—then Lieutenant—Wolseley had Captain,
now
General
Viscount
Wolseley,
G.C.B. come out to the Crimea in the midst of the terrible winter. Within a few days from the time of his landing, he had courted hardship and work by volunteering to serve as an engineer in the trenches; and it is still as an acting engineer that we first see him busied in this evening of the 7th of June. From a work—discontinued soon afterwards—on a part of the ground further east he was summoned to replace an engineer officer who had been killed at the Quarries; and thenceforth till the morning hour which found him exchanging all other toil for the toil of a desperate fight, he shared in the strenuous efforts by which our people were striving to connect

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V.

the works newly captured with Egerton's Pit, and to form, before break of day, what, however imperfect, might prove to be a tenable lodgment. The loss of blood caused by a wound received at an earlier hour did not slacken his powerful energies; and, although he was destined to touch—was destined even to pass—the actual physical limit, of what angry Nature allows in the way of bodily effort, we shall not see him robbed of his strength by either the work or the fighting he chose to go through till the object of his toil had been reached and the difficult victory won.

Whilst thus the men of our “working-parties” were striving to connect the Work of the “Quarries” with the trenches of Gordon's Attack, and to effect such a lodgment, or inchoate lodgment as might afterwards enable fresh “hands” to continue the task under daylight, their comrades in arms were sustaining with checkered fortunes a series of obstinate fights.

Contests
maintained
by infantry
between
two oppo-
site batte-
ries.

In contests for field-works so placed that they can be brought under fire by opposing batteries, men oftentimes find it more easy to wrest the coveted prize from their enemy's hands, than to hold it fast after the capture.* Our people were destined all night to be either under the fire of powerful batteries, or—at intervals—meeting the onslaught of troops intent on recapture.

* We saw, *ante*, p. 8 *et seq.*, an instance in which the Russians seemed to act on that conviction.

At the head of a powerful body of Russian troops drawn from the Kamtchatka, the Volhynia, and the Minsk regiments, Captain Boudistcheff of the Imperial Navy strove hard to retake the counter-approaches (5); but was stubbornly met by the English in spite of their scanty numbers. Captain Boudistcheff the commander of the assailing force was wounded and taken prisoner by our people, and Khomenko the commander of the Kamtchatka battalion was killed. Still the English were forced back a good way by the weight of the assailing mass, and were even, it seems, for the moment driven out of the field-work, carrying with them, however, their distinguished prisoner the commander Boudistcheff, who had fallen wounded into their hands. After making a rally, and re-entering the field-work, our people once more engaged the enemy, and bewildered or depressed by the loss of both Boudistcheff and Khomenko, the Russians faltered a while, but again were led on by Captain Reutlinger of the Engineers, and they rescued the valiant Boudistcheff their wounded commander; but presently, Reutlinger himself was wounded in the head; and our people returning to the charge drove all the Russians out of the Work and back once more into the fortress. The young Engineer officer, Lieutenant Lowry, had survived the perilous task of conducting one of our storming-parties, but long after, was killed whilst rallying our men in the night-time for this last victorious charge.

CHAP.
V.Boudist-
cheff's
attack.Alterna-
tions.The Eng-
lish driving
the Rus-
sians back
into their
fortress.

Somewhat later, and when the night had become more dark than before, another attempt to recover

Attack
made by
the Vol-
hynia regi-
ment.

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V.

Its progress;

and final
discom-
fiture.Conditions
under
which our
troops
fought.Colonel
Shirley.

the counter-approaches was made by the Volhynia regiment, then forming a single battalion. Though the effort was resisted by our people with great determination and energy, the regiment under Colonel Snelkoff its chief proved able to enter the Work, but under a fresh effort made by the English soldiery was presently forced to yield ground. After falling back upon the second line of the counter-approaches the Volhynia regiment rallied and made a rush upon the counter-approaches in front, but, its Colonel being then wounded, and fresh troops reinforcing our people, the enemy was again driven back and fled once more to find shelter behind the works of the fortress.

Maintained on each side with valour and obstinacy, these several infantry conflicts must needs have involved serious loss; yet the periods of time that they occupied were those perhaps when our men suffered less than they did during all the other hours of darkness; for, whilst mingled in fight with the enemy's troops, they were spared from the fire of the place, but always underwent it again (without having yet obtained cover) so soon as they had defeated their assailants and thrust them back into the fortress.

Of course under such conditions there was need of the ability with which, as we know, Colonel Shirley conducted the fight, and especially of the moderation and judgment with which he brought up reinforcements, neither suffering the conflict to end for want of men to sustain it, nor pouring in heavy masses—to fall in proportionate numbers—beneath the guns

of the fortress. Lord Raglan declared that the manner in which Colonel Shirley conducted "this arduous service" entitled him to the highest praise.*

CHAP.
V.

Not long before daybreak, and when indeed some observed the first faint glimmer of twilight, the enemy launched a fresh column against our wearied soldiery, and once more challenged their hold of the long disputed field-work. The column advanced up a dell that opened in front of our people at a distance of more than 200 yards, and, whilst still in the hollow, was seen by Colonel Campbell and Captain Wolseley, both of the 90th, as well as by other officers. They hastened at once to prepare all the means of resistance at hand by summoning the men within reach to rise up from the ground where they lay, to meet the approaching attack; but a startling disappointment awaited them. During the last ten hours of fighting and working, the physical strength of our men had been heavily taxed—taxed so closely up to its limit that, except as regarded a few (of whom we shall presently hear), they had fallen into a state which many, perhaps, might describe as one of faintness, or syncope; but what at all events ailed them was exhaustion of the power which alone can put muscles in action. They could not be roused; and, when lifted, could hardly, if at all, keep their feet.**

Another
Russian
column
advancing
to attempt
the recap-
ture.

Prostrate
state of
most of
our men.

An enemy's column advancing, and before them

* To Secretary of State, 9th June 1855.

** See *post*, p. 266 *et seq.*, as to state of two officers afterwards stricken in this way.

CHAP.
V.

Show of
resistance
attempted
by some
officers and
men.

British troops lying helpless as though stricken and nailed to the ground by some hellish enchantment! "It seemed to me," said one officer present, "like the end of the world." However, some few of our officers—including Colonel Campbell and Captain Wolseley, and also several sergeants and corporals, with some men of the rank and file, making up altogether a strength variously computed at from one to three score—began to act together, and they all instinctively sought to make the very most of their scanty numbers by firing into the column (our officers firing even their pistols), but also by vehement cheering; and happily one alert bugler became a host in himself, for—pouring out the glad notes which govern the movement of troops—he wrought on the imaginations of men, and peopled the darkness with phantoms of a soldiery obeying his call.

Its effect.

The seemingly shallow expedient of attempting a show of resistance with means such as those which were used might pass with many grave men as an inopportune sort of mockery; but—favoured of course by the darkness scarce yielding as yet to dim twilight—the effort, however desperate, produced a strange, sudden effect. The enemy's column began to falter, then stopped. Then—at first with gestures of encouragement and entreaty, but afterwards—with indications of violent rage, with efforts to drag the men forward by their collars, and even to enforce obedience by blows from the flats of their swords, the Russian officers could be seen trying hard to make their people come on. They laboured, how-

The Russian column faltering and coming to a stop;

and falling back.

ever, in vain, and the column began to fall back. CHAP.
V.
 This abortive attempt was the last, and the morning
 that now quickly dawned found our people still
 holding the Work.

In general, the Russian soldiery were no less
 obedient than brave; and the refusal of a powerful
 body composed of such men to advance at a critical
 moment sprang plainly from one of those freaks of
 the imagination which often mislead the best troops
 when attempting a night attack. It may therefore
 be said that our people owed this, their definitive
 victory, to one of the chances of war. Still, if any
 one thinks for a moment of what we called the
 "show of resistance"—the appeal of the single
 bugler, the touching recourse to small pistols, the
 shouts (instead of a volley!) opposed to a column of
 infantry—he will say that, though Fortune took part
 in this the last of the conflicts repeated during the
 night, she at least (as is often her wont) ranged her-
 self on the side of bold men—men who hardly, it
 seems, entertained any rational hope, yet—superbly
 deficient in logic—refused nevertheless to despair.

Whilst thus happily achieving their tasks of the
 more strictly combative sort, our people had also
 done more; for with only a few "hands," and—in
 general—working under strong fire they had con-
 nected the newly won field-work with Egerton's Pit
 by a fairly sufficient "boyau," and moreover had
 thrown up a parapet—consisting of gabions and
 barrels, but also in part of dead bodies—on the
 captured ground, thus providing such means as might

The Eng-
 lish at
 break of
 day still
 retaining
 their hold.

The share
 Fortune
 had in
 bringing
 about this
 result.

Execution
 meanwhile
 of the
 needed
 works.

CHAP.
V.

render it possible to continue the work under daylight, and entitling themselves to hope that their seizure, and night-long defence of what our men called "the Quarries" would ripen into a conquest.

Colonel
Campbell.

We spoke of men lying helpless because they had passed the limits of what human beings could do in the way of hard toil; and it happened, though not till after the fight, that the very two officers whom we saw taking a foremost part in the desperate "show of resistance" were both made to suffer the penalty of working too hard and too long. The fatigue (with a load of anxiety) which the chief, Colonel Campbell, endured on that night of the 7th of June was so great that even five weeks afterwards he had not recovered from the overstrain put on his energies.*

Captain
Wolseley.

The other example was that of a man but twenty-one years of age. Although Captain Wolseley had been engaged on active duty incessantly since the morning of the 7th, his power of exertion continued until the victory had been definitively won.⁽⁶⁾ Then Nature gave way. Unable to stand, he fell helpless among the slain; and, when lifted up, by the strength of others, stood only to fall again. He was conscious, and could speak, but only in a very faint whisper. We find a clue to the nature of his ailment by learning what cured it. Some twenty-four hours of sleep restored to him full life and health.

It was not without submitting to painful sacrifices that our people achieved this hard conquest, a con-

* See his despatch of 13th July 1855 to Sir James Simpson.

quest of what—measured strictly—was only a ribbon of ground, but still one that helped on the siege. CHAP.
V.

VIII.

In killed, wounded, and missing, the Russians lost 5000;* the French 5500;** the English nearly 700, of whom no less than 47 were officers.***

Killed,
wounded,
and
missing.

The French took from the enemy 73 pieces of ordnance, of which all except six were of heavy calibre.†

Spoils.

IX.

The Allies soon reversed, and turned to their own use, the works they had wrested from the enemy; so that what had been the two White Redoubts, the Kamtchatka Lunette, and the counter-approach called the “Quarries,” all powerfully defending Sebastopol, now marked the front newly advanced from which the Allies would spring out to make their attack on the fortress.

The Allies
on their
advanced
front.

By establishing batteries on the new positions thus won, the Allies pressed their siege with a stringency greatly increased; and one result seemingly was that thenceforth there remained but one

Change
experi-
enced by
the garri-
son and in-
habitants.

* Todleben, vol. II. p. 333.

** More exactly 5443. Niel, p. 301.

*** More exactly 671, being the number shown in Journal of Royal Engineers, when corrected by the addition of two casualties omitted by mistake in the Return.

† Niel, p. 298.

CHAP.
V.

quarter in which the inhabitants or the men of the garrison could loiter or pass without risk.*

X.

Continu-
ance of the
Third Bom-
bardment;

the losses
it caused.

The fire of siege-guns we saw open on the afternoon of the 6th was continued on the morrow, and during the three following days. This artillery effort was called the Third Bombardment, and it inflicted on the Russians a loss of 3507 men, the Allies, it seems, only losing under the fire of the responding batteries 150 each day.**

* Ernshoff.

** Todleben, vol. II. pp. 339, 340. We have already seen (*ante*, vol. XII. p. 230) why the Russians submitted to great sacrifices whilst under bombardment.

APPENDIX.

FROM THE MORROW OF INKERMAN TO THE FALL OF CANROBERT.

(CONTINUED.)

NOTES TO CHAPTER VII.

NOTE 1.—*Might not after all be unwise.*—Niel, p. 239. “Le front Malakoff étant devenu le véritable point d’attaque,” p. 213; and elsewhere, p. 239, he speaks of the siege against the Town front as if it were “secondaire.” With our knowledge of the “motive” there was for keeping French enterprise down in a state of abeyance (see vol. XII. chap. v.), we of course must naturally yield less attention than might be otherwise right to any “reason” assigned for taking the preordained course. Niel (who does not always so frame his language as to make it clear whether he is expressing the view of the French military authorities generally, or simply his own personal opinion) can hardly have meant to say that the siege against the Town front had become so decisively “secondary” as to warrant acquiescence under the enemy’s encroachments in that part of the field.

I have myself, it is true, represented that, considering the immense value of the Malakoff position, an earnest conflict maintained in that part of the field would more and more draw to itself the energies of both the besiegers and the besieged; but this was not originally the idea entertained by the French themselves, and the paper they framed on the 2d of February 1855 was so worded as to exclude with great care any notion that the siege

against the Town front was to lose any part of its importance. From that day, accordingly, until after the opening of this period, the siege against the Town front (which was conducted by the formidable Pélissier) continued to be pressed on with vigour, whilst the new siege—the one against the Malakoff—was maintained, as we have seen, with so little resolution that—far from advancing—it retrograded.

NOTE 2.—*Somewhat unscrupulous.*—The Czar naturally protested against this unprovoked Declaration of War by Sardinia; but except on the principle that sanction for *any* opinion can be gathered from the teachers of “International Law,” a denouncer, treating Cavour’s intervention as “unscrupulous,” could hardly be recommended to look for support in his Grotius.

When once war is constituted between two or more Powers, the quaint, old, unheeded admonitions against “unjust wars” don’t aim, I think, even in theory at the conscience of any other Power disposed to join in the fray.

NOTE 3.—*Always thoroughly cordial.*—I had the honour at one time of being acquainted with the late Count Genoa de Revel,* the Sardinian officer acting at the English Headquarters as an organ of communication with General la Marmora, and it was always in terms of devoted, enthusiastic attachment that the Count used to speak of Lord Raglan.

NOTE TO CHAPTER VIII.

NOTE 1.—*To be attempted.*—It must not be supposed that the vote of the Council was based upon that general opinion which in terms it might seem to express; for the English on such occasions did not sit in judgment on the opportunities of assault which the French might really have before them, nor *vice versa*. The French would simply say, “We don’t yet see our way to “assaulting those defences which we confront,” and their announcement would be treated as conclusive; as (reciprocally) would be that of the English, who at their huge distance from the Redan, had of course no intention of sending infantry against

* A brother of the late Count Adrian de Revel, long the Sardinian Minister at the Court of St. James’s, and greatly loved and esteemed in this country.

it otherwise than in concert with assaults simultaneously undertaken by the French.

Lord Raglan, I believe, had no independent means of becoming acquainted with the full extent of the havoc wrought on those Works which were attacked by the French siege-guns, and he—almost necessarily—received his impressions on that subject from General Canrobert. Of course Canrobert's representations as to the failure of the bombardment seemed to be every day receiving confirmation, because (owing to the repairs every night) the enemy's defences each morning seemed as strong as they had been at the first.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IX.

NOTE 1.—*This part of the plan.*—Lord Panmure afterwards learnt that Sir Colin Campbell had pronounced the Mackenzie Heights to be virtually impregnable, and became very angry with Lord Ellenborough, through whom Sir Colin's opinion had been made known in London.

NOTE 2.—*Take effect by surprise.*—Speaking of the force he had meant to lead up from Aloushta, the Emperor wrote that it was sufficient “pour détruire toute l'armée Russe qui pouvait être surprise, et prise à revers avant d'avoir pu réunir toutes ses forces.”

It is hard to see how the Emperor (in the then listening state of the world) could have hoped to see his plan take effect by way of surprise like that famous Marengo campaign which he seems to have had in his mind.

NOTE 3.—*Or otherwise into the sea.*—After speaking of what was to be first achieved by his Army of Diversion, and of its capture of Simferopol, the Emperor says: “On s'empare de cette ville, et on y laisse une garnison suffisante, ou bien on occupe sur la route que nous venons de parcourir une bonne position qui assure les derrières de l'armée. Maintenant de deux choses l'une; ou l'armée Russe qui est en position devant Sébastopol abandonne cette formidable position pour venir à la rencontre de l'armée qui s'avance du côté de Batchi Seräi, et alors la première armée d'opérations sous les ordres de Lord Raglan la pousse l'épée dans les reins, et s'empare de la posi-

“tion d’Inkerman;* ou bien les Russes attendent dans leur
 “lignes l’arrivée de l’armée qui vient de Simféropol, et alors
 “celle-ci s’avance de Batchi Seräi sur Sébastopol en appuyant
 “toujours sa gauche aux montagnes, fait sa jonction avec l’armée
 “du Maréchal Raglan qui s’est avancé de Baidar sur Alhat, re-
 “pousse l’armée Russe, et la rejette dans Sébastopol, ou dans
 “la mer.”

I make this extract from the Emperor’s later exposition of his plan; but nearly, if not quite the same words are contained in his Letter of the 27th of April.

NOTE 4.—*To avert the catastrophe.*—As regards the siege-army, this is amply shown by the statements contained in chap. XI.

As regards the force invading from Aloushta, we may say that (unless upon the improbable supposition of the enemy’s being taken by surprise) the “Army of Diversion” would have to do what is commonly understood to be all but impossible, that is, to debouch from mountain-passes in the face of an enemy both powerful and fully prepared.

As regards the “1st Army of Operation” confided to the English Commander, we must see that the more deeply Lord Raglan might become engaged in trying to execute the Emperor’s plan, the more impossible he would find it to come in good time to the rescue of either the “Siege Army” or “the Army of Diversion.”

NOTES TO CHAPTER X.

NOTE 1.—*Into full play.*—The laying down of the cable had been completed a week before; but till afterwards, the appliances needed for making it carry a message were not brought into due order.

From the beginning of the War, land-service wires of the electric telegraph had been occasionally used; but till after the laying down of the submarine cable, they did no more than reduce the transit by about three days—*i.e.*, for example from about thirteen days to ten.

* The Emperor, adopting Russian nomenclature, means the Heights on the *right* bank of the river, which I call the “Old City Heights.”

NOTE 2.—*Could not divine.*—A note accompanying Canrobert's communication of the telegram said: "Les deux chiffres 'conservés sont faux, et n'ont pu être traduits.'" One learns from the Emperor's letter of the 7th of May to Lord Cowley that by "45" was meant "defensive position," and by "450," "attack the Russian army."

NOTE 3.—*In their rear.*—Under many conditions not hard to imagine, the howl of the Imperial City might have presaged grave troubles for the Allies; and it was well that the puissant Ambassador, after an absence of several days, opportunely returned to his charge. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe had been visiting the Crimea. He landed there on the 26th of April, and left its shore in the evening of the 3d of May.

NOTES TO CHAPTER XI.

NOTE 1.—*Campaigning Plan.*—This Paper describing itself as "Le Plan de Campagne élaboré par S.M. L'Empereur Napoléon III." is marked "Très secret," but not dated, and was handed by Canrobert to Lord Raglan on the 14th of May. It is much more compressed than the Letter of the 27th of April, and Canrobert, I see, in his note, calls it the "résumé of the Plan." It purports, I see, to assign 70,000 instead of 60,000 men for the defence of the siege-works; but the larger figure was meant, I believe, to include the 10,000 "indisponibles" mentioned in the previous exposition, and did not therefore import any change. This last Exposition discards the words which had described Lord Raglan's "Army of Operation" as "destined to 'seize the Mackenzie Heights,'" but in other respects it does not differ very materially from the Letter of the 27th of April. Both these Papers were frankly imparted to our people—the first one of the 27th of April to our Government, and the second, as we saw, to Lord Raglan. One or other of the two Papers was brought out by Colonel Favé.

NOTE 2.—*To act in the field.*—Canrobert seems to have understood—but I am sure erroneously—that Lord Raglan whilst in the Conference was willing to split his force into two armies, and did not until the next day refuse to do so.

NOTE 3.—*The hopes he had entertained of being attacked by the enemy on the reopening of the bombardment.*—His words were:—"La non-attaque de nos lignes extérieures par l'ennemi à la réouverture du feu, attaque qui paraissait très-probable, et sur laquelle j'avais fondé des espérances d'un succès plus décisif que celui d'Inkerman." To learn how conspicuously this disappointment at not being attacked contrasted with Canrobert's former moods, see *ante*, vol. XII. p. 162.

FROM THE OPENING OF PÉLISSIER'S COMMAND TO THE DEATH OF LORD RAGLAN.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I.

NOTE 1.—*Allies of the Sultan.*—This was done by bringing about the dismissal of Riza, the Minister of War, who was believed to have been always intriguing against Omar Pasha.—Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, Secret, 5th June 1855.

NOTE 2.—*Feared to displease.*—There is nothing in history more certain than this. At the fatal Cabinet of July 1870, the Emperor had actually congratulated his Ministers on the diplomatic victory that he had achieved by bringing about the withdrawal of the Hohenzollern candidate, and all seemed to promise both peace and contentment, when Lebœuf interposed, and pronounced that the avoidance of war (after all the excitement stirred up) would cause an ill feeling in the army.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II.

NOTE 1.—*Once more recaptured the Work.*—That this was the ending of the fifth fight is asserted with precision by Niel (p. 254); and Todleben, with the statement before him, does not really and effectually deny it, nor substitute for it any

narrative of a Russian victory. He indeed writes in one place as though he understood that the retreat of the French a little before dawn was a movement caused by their being "worn out" (*épuisé*), but he elsewhere says in terms that the fifth fight resulted in a capture of the counter-approach; and, as he also shows that the fourth fight had left it in possession of the Russians, it follows that the fifth capture was a capture by the French.—Totleben, pp. 242, 243. On the whole, I can say that, with the accounts of Niel and Todleben before me, I entertain no doubt that the fifth fight resulted in a victory for the French.

NOTE 2.—*By first reducing the Malakoff*.—I base my account of the foregoing occurrences detailed in this chapter upon the despatch of General Pélissier, and the official narratives of Niel, p. 250 *et seq.*, and Todleben, vol. II. p. 226 *et seq.*; and having said thus much, I consider myself entitled to disclaim responsibility for the accuracy of the three generals whose statements I follow. I don't overload the diction by saying in words at every sentence: "according to Pélissier," or "according to Niel," or "according to Todleben," but wish it to be understood that I do so in effect by means of this general indication.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III.

NOTE 1.—*Investing the place*.—This anterior purpose, as first declared by Pélissier, was only what one calls the "repression" of the south side of Sebastopol. But he afterwards, as we have seen, insisted that its thorough conquest must be effected before resorting to field operations. After forming that last resolve, to which he always *in action* adhered, he once or twice *wrote* (inconsistently) as though the "repression" might suffice.

NOTE 2.—*With scorn, and with victory*.—No one ought to forget that, in principle, resistance to lawful authority is an evil of formidable magnitude; but in that grave dilemma with which Pélissier dealt, the alternative was one that would hazard a hundred thousand French troops in what, as the wisest men judged, would have been a fantastic campaign, involving per-

haps cruel sacrifices, not only of men, but also of warlike honour. See *post*, Appendix, Note 9 to chap. IV.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV.

NOTE 1.—*Destroyed them*.—Todleben agrees, vol. II. p. 280, that out of the Kertch flotilla three vessels were destroyed—viz., the Berdiansk (as mentioned in the text), the Mogoutchy, and the Jouets, but it might be inferred from his language (though he does not say so in terms) that the Argonaut and the Goëts escaped.

NOTE 2.—*For the protection of their lives and property*.—The word “Tartars” must have been used by the deputation in a specific sense, indicating some known band or bands of men supposed to be bent on pillage; for the “Tartars” in the villages generally were at this very time giving shelter and kindly help to the frightened refugees from Kertch.—*Ibid*. General Todleben nowhere calls the men “Tartars,” but always “marauders.”

NOTE 3.—*The piteous screaming of women*.—I have rightly spoken of the irruption of mounted Cossacks into a room as a fact of not unfrequent occurrence; but, as regards one particular instance of it, my informant, Sir Edmund Strelecki (phonetically, Streleski), long the favourite of the London world, was one of those present. He was a lad at the time. After the famous retreat from Moscow, he was at an evening party going on upon the first floor when the Cossacks trotted up-stairs and rode into the drawing-room.

It was not without reason that the Cossacks used to keep their saddles when entering houses and rooms. They used to have plunder stowed on the backs of their horses, and feared that, if separated from them, they would be robbed of the spoil by their comrades.

In more recent times, the mounted Cossacks in the service of the State have been as much under control as the regular forces; and, although not yet famous for prowess in combat, they are made useful in numberless ways.

NOTE 4.—*Meant to defend the place*.—The summons demanded the surrender of—not the town, but—the Crown pro-

perty. Whether General Krasnoff misread the summons, or only affected to have done so I do not know.

NOTE 5.—*That that last vessel perished.*—Though accepted (through some inadvertence) by General Todleben, the story of a serious fight, and of bayonet charges, effected in defence of the stores, is altogether a fable.

NOTE 6.—*Harm to the town.*—The story accepted by Todleben, of allied attacks made on some vessels that had sought refuge in the Gulf, and of the assailants having been beaten off by Kostrakoff with his Cossacks, is fabulous; not one man of the Allies, on the 5th of June, was either killed or wounded.

NOTE 7.—*To refrain altogether from sending it.*—Rousset, who had access to the papers at the French War Office, imagined that the Emperor's telegram had miscarried or been made to miscarry; but that, as we see from the text, was not the case. From the blank at the French War Office, coupled with the actual result, my surmise, put out under cover of a "perhaps," may derive some support.

NOTE 8.—*His sovereign's imperious mandate.*—Rousset, who had access to the papers in the French War Office, states that the Emperor's telegram was inexplicably delayed in transmission from the 3d to the 8th of June. This, of course, was an error, because we know that Pélissier imparted the telegram to Lord Raglan on the 6th; but the statement, though erroneous in its conclusion, seems to show that down to the 8th no answer had come from Pélissier to the telegram of the 3d of June.

NOTE 9.—*Proved able to set him aside.*—The resistance of a general to the authority of the State is, of course, a grave matter, and cannot be justified on light grounds; but, as Pélissier retained his command, one, I think, may observe what passed, without being forced into the question of casuistry which presents itself when a general's disobedience breaks up his relations with the State.

NOTE 10.—*Protest against every such measure.*—"Je suis heureux qu'elle ait réussi; mais néanmoins je ne puis m'empêcher de considérer comme *fatal* tout ce qui tend aujourd'hui à disséminer vos forces."—Emperor to Pélissier, 30th May

1855. The underscoring of the word "fatal" was an act of the Emperor.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V.

NOTE 1.—*Havoc and ruin.*—"Mais le comble du dommage "auquel cet ouvrage était exposé lui venaient des batteries Anglaïses qui savaient compenser la mesure un peu lente de leur "feu par la précision remarquable de leur tir.—Totleben, vol. II. p. 310.

NOTE 2.—*Accepted the Prince's bold story.*—The French say distinctly that after capturing the Work they spiked its guns (Rousset, vol. II. p. 235); and Totleben also admits this, as also that the embrasures were destroyed, saying that he himself ordered the guns to be *unspiked* and the embrasures to be repaired, vol. II. p. 330. I suppose Prince Ouroussoff would hardly maintain that the destruction of the embrasures and the spiking of the guns could have been coolly effected at the time of his "bayonet" charge.

NOTE 3.—*Respecting Skariatine, see Note in the Appendix.*—Skariatine (who had commanded the Selinghinsk Redoubt in February or March, and well knew the ground) was a Lieutenant in the Russian navy, and one of the most gifted of that superb body of men—the men of the Black Sea Fleet—who had gloriously defended Sebastopol in the early, the desperate time.

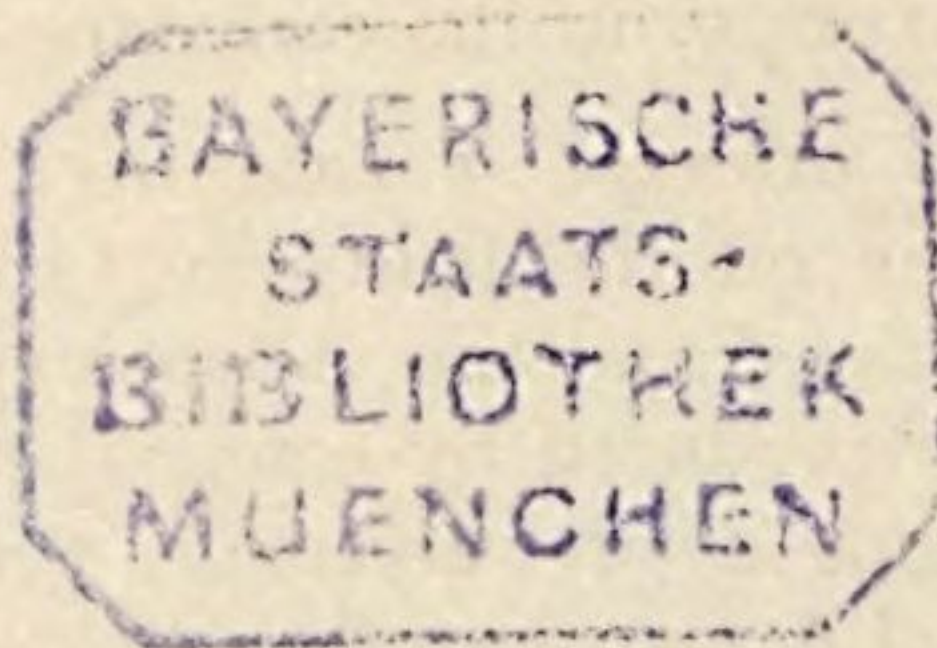
NOTE 4.—*Will attempt a recapture.*—When long afterwards he was borne off the field, his bearers trode on one of the "infernal machines," and the violent explosion that followed is supposed to have produced by concussion a permanent injury of the heart, bringing death very many years afterwards to the distinguished General Armstrong, then holding high office at the Horse Guards.

NOTE 5.—*To retake the counter-approaches.*—The Captain led five companies, equal, if the battalions had been at their average strength (which, however, was far from being the case), to about 935 men.

NOTE 6.—*Had been definitively won.*—On the morning of the 7th, Captain Dawson, R.E., was killed; and having been

summoned to replace him immediately, Wolseley did not have the benefit of the arrangement which had wisely provided that those who were to attack the Quarries in the evening should be exempt from toil during the day, so as to enter fresh upon their work. Whilst speaking of Captain Wolseley, I may mention that for his services in the fights of "the Quarries" he won two-fold praise,—from Colonel Tylden, commanding the Engineers, and from Colonel Shirley, commanding the combatants.

END OF VOL. XIII.



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